

NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.

HINDUISM.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP	PAGE
I —INTRODUCTORY	1
II —THE VEDIC HYMNS	17
III —THE BRAHMANAS AND THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM	33
IV —THE UPANISHADS AND BRAHMANICAL PHILOSOPHY	43
V —BRAHMANICAL LAW, DOMESTIC USAGES, AND CASTE	53
VI —THE BUDDHISTIC MOVEMENT, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON BRÄHMANISM	72
VII —DEVELOPMENT OF HINDUISM, AND THE DOCTRINE OF TRIPLE MANIFESTATION	93
VIII —DEVELOPMENT OF SAIVISM, VAISHNAVISM, AND THE DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION	97
IX.—THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH AS DEVELOPED IN THE PURANAS AND TANTRAS	115
X —MEDIEVAL AND MODERN SECTS	134
XI —MODERN CASTES	151
XII —MODERN IDOL WORSHIP, SACRED OBJECTS, HOLY PLACES AND TIMES	165
APPENDIX —	
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE SIX SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY	187
ECLECTIC SCHOOL—THE BHAGAVAD GITÄ	206
JAINISM	221
THE CÄRVÄKAS	224
INDEX	228

HINDUISM.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THAT part of the great Āryan race which immigrated from Central Asia, through the mountain passes into India, settled first in the districts near the river Sindhu (now called the Indus)

The Persians pronounced this word Hindhu, and named their Āryan brethren Hindūs. The Greeks, who probably gained their first ideas of India from the Persians, dropped the hard aspirate, and called the Hindūs Ἰνδοί.

After the Hindū Āryans had spread themselves over the plains of the Ganges, the Persians gave the name Hindūstan, or 'abode of the Hindūs,' to the whole district between the Panjab and Benares, and this name is commonly used, especially by the Musalmāns, for a still more extended region, as far as the Vindhya mountains, and even, less correctly, for other parts of India.

The classical name for India, however, as usually employed in Sanskrit literature and recognized by the whole Sanskritic races, is *Bhārata* or *Bhārata varsh* (sometimes *Bhārata khanda* or *Kumārīkā khanda*),

'the country of Bharata,'—a king who appears to have ruled over a large extent of territory in ancient times. Manus name for the whole central region between the Himalaya and Vindhya mountains is *Arjataria*, 'abode of the Aryans,' and this is also a classical appellation for that particular portion of India. Another name for the whole of India, occurring in Sanskrit poetry, is *Jambu-dīpa*. Strictly, however, this last is merely a poetical name for the whole earth, of which India was thought to be the most important part.

The population of India in 1881 amounted to 253,891,821. So immense an assemblage of beings does not, of course, form one nation. India is almost a continent, like Europe. From the earliest times its richness has attracted successive immigrants and invaders from overpopulated and poorer regions, Asiatic and European. Its inhabitants differ as much as the various continental races, and speak languages equally distinct.

First came the primitive immigrants—some Scythian, some Mongolian in their origin—and all falling under the general head of what are called Turanian races who, migrating from Central Asia and the steppes of Tartary and Tibet, entered India by successive incursions—many of them through the passes adjoining the Panjab in the North west, and others through those North eastern mountain ravines which mark the course of the river Brahma putra.

The great Dravidian race of the South of India (probably symbolized by the Ravana and Vibhishanas of epic poetry) represents the most powerful of these

early immigrants, and must not be confounded with the more uncivilized aboriginal tribes, inhabiting the hills and the jungles of India, and symbolized in poetry by monkeys

Next descended on the plains of Hindustan the first overflowings of the mighty tide of Aryan immigration, caused by the rapid growth and expansion of that primeval family, who called themselves Ārya, or 'noble,' and spoke a language the common source of Sanskrit, Prakrit, Zand, Persian, and Armenian in Asia, and of the Hellenic, Italic, Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic languages in Europe. Starting at a later period than the primitive Turanian races, but, like them, from some part of the tableland of Central Asia—probably the region surrounding the sources of the Oxus, near Bokhara—they separated into distinct nationalities and peopled Europe, Persia, and India. The Hindu Āryans, after detaching themselves from the general body of emigrants, settled themselves down as agriculturists (probably at some period between 2000 and 1500 years B C) in the districts surrounding the Indus, the five rivers of the Panjab, and the sacred Sarasvati—these seven rivers being called *Sapta Sindhu* (in Zand, *Hapti Hendu*). Thence, after a time, they overran by successive irruptions the plains of the Ganges, and spread themselves over the region called Aryavarta, occupying the whole of Central India, and either coalescing with, and, so to speak, Āryanizing the primitive inhabitants they found there, or driving all who resisted them to the south and to the hills. They were the first promoters of that moral and intellectual

progress and civilization in India, of which the Dravidian immigrants were the pioneers

But India, even after its occupation by the great Aryan race, yielded it self up an easy prey to every powerful invader. According to Herodotus, it was subjugated by Darius Hystaspes. This conquest probably occurred about 500 years B C. It must have been very partial, and did not extend beyond the plains of the Indus, including the Panjab and Sindh. It was probably followed by considerable subsequent trade and traffic between Persia and India, and to this commercial intercourse may be due the introduction into India of many new ideas—religious and philosophical—and perhaps, also, of the Phœnician alphabet, with which that of some of the Asoka edicts and inscriptions (about 250 B C) is now generally thought to be connected.

The expedition of Alexander the Great to the banks of the Indus about 327 B C, is a better authenticated fact. To this invasion is due the first trustworthy information obtained by Europeans concerning the north westerly portion of India and the region of the five rivers, down which the Grecian troops were conducted in ships by Neirchus. Megasthenes who was the ambassador of Seleukos Nikator (Alexander's successor, and ruler over the whole region between the Euphrates and Indus, B C. 312) at the court of Candragupta (Sandrokottus), in Pataliputra (Patna, or Παλιβόθρις) during a long sojourn in that city collected further information, of which Strabo, Pliny, Arrian, and others availed themselves.

The next immigrants, after a long interval, were the Parsis. This small tribe of Persians were driven from their native land by the Muhammadan conquerors under the Khalif Omar in the seventh century of our era. Adhering to the ancient religion of Persia, which resembled that of the Veda (viz the worship of one God, symbolized by and manifested in the elements, especially fire), and bringing with them the records of their faith, the Zand Avastā¹ of their prophet Zoroaster, they settled down in the neighbourhood of Surat about 1100 years ago, and became great merchants and shipbuilders. For two or three centuries we know little of their history. Their religion prevented them from making proselytes, and they never multiplied within themselves to any extent nor did they amalgamate with the Hindu population, so that even now their number only amounts to about seventy thousand. Nevertheless, from their busy, enterprising habits, in which they emulate Europeans, they form an important section of the population of Bombay and Western India.

Then came the Muhammadans (Arabs, Turks, Afghans, Moguls, and Persians), who entered India at different times. They now number forty-one millions, or about one sixth of the entire population, but a large

¹ More properly *Avasta Zand*, text and commentary. The term Zand, which meant commentary, was afterwards applied to the language in which the Parsi sacred books were written. This Zand language is only separated by a short interval from that of one set of the cuneiform inscriptions, which again was closely followed by Pahlavi.

number of them are descendants of Hindus converted to Islam. Although they became politically supreme, they were never able to supplant the Hindus, as these had done their predecessors. Moreover, it was the policy of the Muhammadan conquerors to bend in many points to the prejudices of their Indian subjects. Hence the Muslims of India became to some extent Hinduized, and in language, habits, and character took from the Hindus more than they imparted.

Nor has the Hindu element lost its ascendancy in India, notwithstanding the accession of European ingredients from Portugal, Holland, Denmark, France, and finally England. Albeit the English have spread themselves over the whole country, and achieved a political supremacy greater than that which once belonged to the Musalmāns, yet they have blended far less with the inhabitants. Oil and water do not keep more distinct than do the rulers and the ruled at present in India. The great bulk of the population is still essentially Hindu, and the moral influence of what may be called the Indo-Āryan race is still paramount. Nevertheless, this race by no means forms one united nation. Differences distinguish it, as great as those which once divided and still distinguish European Āryans.

Many causes have combined to produce such diversities. The Indo-Āryans entered India by successive incursions, so that the earlier arrivals differ from the later as widely as Greeks and Romans from Kelts and Teutons. Then, variety of climate has had its effect in modifying character. Moreover, contact with the non-Āryan aboriginal races and with Mu

animadans and Europeans has affected the Āryans variously in different parts of India

As to the non Āryan races, these also present great differences. They are now generally divided into the two classes of Dravidians and Kolarian aborigines, both of which races belong to the division of the world's inhabitants loosely called Turanian, but the first, as already hinted, are by far the most important, from their having attained an independent civilization, and from their having become either wholly or partially Hinduized in religion, manners, and usages, while the Kolarians continue still in their uncivilized aboriginal condition

Reckoning, therefore, Āryans and non Āryans, and taking difference of speech as marking and perpetuating separation of populations though not as necessarily determining distinction of race, we are able to distinguish fourteen separate peoples in India, constituting what might almost be called fourteen separate nationalities. The following are the fourteen different languages which mark them —

1 *Hindi*, which we may calculate as spoken by about one hundred million persons in Hindūstan proper, including the High Hindi and the Muhammadan form of it (mixed with Persian and Arabic, called Hindustani), and various other Hindi dialects, such as Brj, Kanauji, Mewāri, Old Purbi, Awadhi, Bhojpuri, and the Marwari of the district of Jodhpur (the most extensive of all the Rājput states), which last dialect is perhaps chiefly deserving of notice.

2 *Bengali*, spoken by about thirty nine millions in Bengal.

✓ 3 *Marāṭhi*, spoken by about seventeen millions in Mahārashtra in the Deġhan, including a dialect of it in the Konkan, known as Konkanī

✓ 4 *Gujarātī*, spoken by about nine millions and a half in Gujarat

✓ 5 *Panyābī*, spoken by about fourteen millions in the Panjab

✓ 6 *Kāśmīrī*, by nearly two millions in Kāśmīr

7 *Sindhī*, spoken by about two millions in Sindh

8 *Oriyā*, spoken by about seven millions in Orissa

The foregoing eight belong to distinct divisions of the Āryan race, which may be called Indo Āryan.

Next, taking the non Āryans, we have six other differences of race, which we may also mark by the names of their languages. In the first place, the four great Dravidian races (numbering nearly forty six million persons), as follows —

9 *Tamīl*, spoken by about thirteen millions, beginning with the northern portion of Ceylon, and extending from Cape Comorin northward along the south of Travancore, and what is called the Karnāṭic, that is, along the southern part of the Coromandel coast to about a hundred miles north of Madras

✓ 10 *Malayalam*, almost a dialect of Tamīl, spoken by nearly five millions in Travancore and along the southern portion of the Malabar coast.

✓ 11 *Telugu*, called from its softness the Italian* of Indīa, spoken by about seventeen millions, from a line north of Madras, along the northern part of the Coromandel coast, or Northern Circars, and over part of the Nizam's territory

✓ 12 *Kanarese*, spoken by rather more than eight

millions in Mysore, in the southern portion of the Bombay Presidency, in Kanari, and part of the Malabar coast

There are two semi-cultivated Dravidian dialects, viz the Tulu, spoken in a small district of Kanari and the Koorg or Kodugu, spoken by only 150,000 persons in the hill district to the west of Mysore which scarcely merit enumeration as languages

Then comes the chief uncultivated Dravidian language, viz.—

✓ 13 *Gond*, spoken by nearly two million aborigines,¹ divided into clans, some of whom are almost savages, while others are comparatively civilized inhabiting Gondwana in the central provinces. The language of the Gond race has been lately systematized and expressed in Devanagari characters

The other uncultivated Dravidian dialects, viz — Oraon Rajmahal Khond Toda and Kota, belong to insignificant tribes rather than to races

Lastly come the wholly uncultivated and barbarous non-Aryan and non Dravidian dialects, called,—

✓ 14 *Kolarian*, belonging to the Kols, inhabiting the plateau of Chota Nagpur and numbering more than three millions. They speak about seven rude dialects, of which the best known are those of the Kols, the Juangs (the most primitive tribe in all India), the Santals, the Mundas, and the Hos

In the above enumeration are not reckoned the,

¹ It does not follow that the Gonds are Dravidian because their language is so any more than that the Cornish people are of the English race because they have adopted our language
Dr Caldwell is my authority for most of these numbers

languages which belong so to speak, to the outer fringe of India proper, e.g. the Pushtu or Pakhtu of Afghanistan, the Nepali or Nepalese of Nepal, the Asamese of Asam, the Burmese of British Burmah, and the Sinhalese of Ceylon, besides almost countless dialects spoken by tribes inhabiting the mountains of Nepal Bhutan, and Asam (some of them coming under what are called the Himalaic family, and more or less connected with Tibetan), making, according to Mr. Cust, no less than 539 languages and dialects, cultivated and uncultivated, in the whole of India and its bordering regions.

But besides the separation caused by difference of race and language, the divisions and subdivisions of the classes of society within each of the more civilized and cultivated of these several populations crystallized more rapidly in India than in Europe, and with far harder lines of demarcation. Even in districts where the Hindus are called by one name, and make use of one speech caste regulations have operated to break them up into an infinite number of independent communities each priding itself on maintaining its individuality and exclusiveness.

2 The question then arises how such differences of race, language, and social usages have affected religious creed. It is remarkable that with all their diversities, the Hindu populations throughout India have a religious faith which, preserved as it is in one language and one literature, furnishes a good evidence of the original unity of the Indo-Aryan immigrants, while it faithfully reflects the present diversified character of the vast country in which it prevails.

It is a creed based on an original, simple, pantheistic doctrine, but branching out into an endless variety of polytheistic superstitions. Like the sacred fig tree of India, which from a single stem sends out numerous branches destined to send roots to the ground and become trees themselves, till the parent stool is lost in a dense forest of its own offshoots, so has this pantheistic creed rooted itself firmly in the Hindu mind, and spread its ramifications so luxuriantly that the simplicity of its root dogma is lost in an exuberant outgrowth of monstrous mythology.

That we may at once briefly formulate this leading dogma, we cannot do better than give its own formula of three words, as stated by its own philosophers, thus,—Ekam eva aditijam, 'There is but one Being, no second', nothing really exists but the one Universal Spirit called Brahman, and whatever appears to exist separately from that Spirit is mere illusion. ✓ This is the uncompromising creed of true Brahmanism. This, according to the orthodox Hindu philosophy, is the only true Veda. This, at least according to the belief of the generality of educated Hindūs, is the only true knowledge to which the Veda leads.

Popular Hinduism, on the other hand, though supposed to accept this creed as the way of true knowledge (Jnana marga) which it admits to be the highest way of salvation, adds to it two other inferior ways —

1st Belief in the efficacy of sacrifices, rites, penances, and austerities, which is the Karma marga, 'way of works'

and Devotion to personal deities, which is the *Bhakti marga*, 'way of love and devotion' (the term *bhakti* corresponding to the *Upasana* of the Upanishads)

Moreover, to account for its polytheism idol worship, and system of caste distinctions, popular Hinduism supposes that the one Universal Being amuses himself by illusory appearances, that he manifests himself variously, as light does in the rainbow, and that all visible and material objects, good and bad, including gods, demons, demigods, good and evil spirits, human beings and animals, are emanations from him, and are ultimately to be reabsorbed into his essence

Hence it may easily be surmised that the road connecting the true knowledge and the popular doctrine must have many windings. And it may with truth be asserted that no description of Hinduism can be exhaustive which does not touch on almost every religious and philosophical idea that the world has ever known

Starting from the Veda, Hinduism has ended in embracing something from all religions, and in presenting phases suited to all minds. It is all tolerant, all-compliant, all comprehensive, all absorbing. It has its spiritual and its material aspect, its esoteric and exoteric, its subjective and objective, its rational and irrational, its pure and its impure. It may be compared to a huge polygon, or irregular multilateral figure. It has one side for the practical, another for the severely moral, another for the devotional and imaginative, another for the sensuous and sensual, and another for the philosophical and speculative. Those who rest

in ceremonial observances find it all sufficient, those who deny the efficacy of works, and make faith the one requisite, need not wander from its pale, those who are addicted to sensual objects may have their tastes gratified, those who delight in meditating on the nature of God and man, the relation of matter and spirit, the mystery of separate existence, and the origin of evil, may here indulge their love of speculation. And this capacity for almost endless expansion causes almost endless sectarian divisions even among the followers of any particular line of doctrine.

In unison with its variable character and almost universal receptivity, the religious belief of the Hindus has really no single succinct designation. Looking at it in its pantheistic aspect, we may call it Brahmanism, in its polytheistic development, Hinduism, but these are not names recognized by the natives.

If, then, such all-comprehensive breadth and diversity are essential features of Hinduism, is it possible to give a concise description of it which shall be intelligible and satisfactory? Only one guide to its intricacies exists.

India though it has, as we have seen, more than five hundred spoken dialects, has only one sacred language and only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike, however diverse in race, dialect, rank, and creed. That language is Sanskrit, and that literature is Sanskrit literature—the only repository of the Veda or 'knowledge' in its widest sense, the only vehicle of Hindu theology, philosophy, law, and mythology, the only mirror in which all the creeds, opinions, customs, and usages

of the Hindus are faithfully reflected, and (if we may be allowed a fourth metaphor) the only quarry whence the requisite materials may be obtained for improving the vernaculars, or for expressing important religious and scientific ideas.

In Europe literature changes with language. Each modern dialect has its own literature, which is the best representative of the present religious, social, and intellectual condition of the people. To know the Italians, we need not study Latin, when their modern literature is at our command. But the literature of the Hindu vernacular dialects (except, perhaps, that of Tamil) is scarcely yet deserving of the name. In most cases, it consists of mere reproductions of the Sanskrit. To know the Hindus, to understand their past and present condition, to reach their very heart and soul, we must study Sanskrit literature. It is, in truth, even more to India than classical and patristic literature was to Europe at the time of the Reformation. It gives a deeper impress to the Hindu mind, so that every Hindu, however unlettered, is unconsciously affected by it.

There are, however, certain portions of Sanskrit literature which are, *par excellence*, sacred, and these fall under the two grand heads of *Śruti* and *Smṛiti*.

Śruti—‘that which is directly heard or revealed’—includes the three portions of the Veda, viz Mantra, Brahmana, and Upanishad, the last being the source of the Darśanas or systems of philosophy.

It is equivalent to direct revelation, and is believed to have no human author.

Smṛiti, ‘that which is remembered and handed

down by tradition,' though believed to be founded on this direct revelation, is thought to have been delivered by human authors. In its widest acceptation *Smṛiti* may be said to denote almost the whole of Post Vedic literature, under four heads (A) the six *Vedāṅgas* (viz., 1 the *Kalpa*, or *Śrauta sūtras*, which are rules for applying the *Mantra* and *Brahma* to Vedic sacrifices, 2 *Silśha*, or the science of pronunciation, 3 *Chandas*, or metre, 4 *Nirukta*, or exposition of the *Veda*, 5 *Vyākaraṇa*, or grammar, 6 *Jyotiṣha*, or astronomy), (B) the *Smarta sūtras*, under the two divisions of *Gṛhya sūtras*, or rules relating to domestic rites, and *Samayacarika-sūtras*, relating to conventional usages, (C) the *Dharma śāstras*, or 'Law books,' especially the laws of *Manu*, *Yājñavalkya*, and other so-called inspired lawgivers, supposed to have grown out of the *Smarta sūtras*, (D) the *Bhakti śāstras*, including the *Itihāsas*, or 'legendary poems,' viz., the great epic poem called *Mahābhārata* and the other great epic called *Ramayana* (though the latter is rather a *Kāvya* by a known human author, than an *Itihāsa* attributed to superhuman authorship), and including also the eighteen *Purāṇas*, or ancient legendary histories, with their train of eighteen Inferior *Purāṇas* (*Upapurāṇas*), and subsequent *Tantras*.

Although it is not part of our present plan to describe in detail all these divisions of Sanskrit literature, yet to understand the various phases through which Hinduism has passed, it is essential to have some knowledge of the principal works under four departments—viz., I The three portions of the *Veda*,

Mantra, Brahmana, and Upanishad. II The Darśanas, or systems of philosophy. III The Dharma śāstras. IV The Bhakti śāstras. The principal works under these four heads are the best exponents of the different periods of development through which the Hindū religious mind has passed and which, together, make up Hinduism. The hymns of the Veda are the expression of that early stage of religious progress which may be called physiolatry, the Brahmanas represent ritualism and sacrifice, the Upanishads and Darśanas represent rationalistic and pantheistic philosophy, Manu, Yājñavalkya, and the law books represent caste and domestic usages, the Itihāsas, Puranas, and Tantras represent the principle of love for and devotion to personal gods. No account of Hinduism can be satisfactory which is not accompanied with translations of occasional passages from some of these representative works.

CHAPTER II

THE VEDIC HYMNS (*Mantras*).

THE word Veda (meaning 'knowledge') is a term applied to divine *unwritten* knowledge, imagined to have issued like breath from the self-existent Being called *Brahman*, and thought to be itself self-existent. Hence the Veda is not unfrequently itself called *Brahman*, which word may mean either 'the universally diffused essence,' or else 'the spirit of devotion permeating the human mind' or 'divine spiritual knowledge.'

This divine knowledge was also connected with *Śabda*, or articulate sound (thought to be eternal), and hence sometimes regarded as an eternal voice (*vāc*) heard by certain holy men called Rishis, or, again, as eternal words actually seen by them as well as heard¹. By them the *Divine knowledge*—thus supernaturally received through the ear and eye—was transmitted, not in writing, but by constant oral repetition, through a succession of teachers, who claimed to be its rightful recipients, and were thence called *Brahmans*, that is to say, the repositories both of the divine word, and of the spirit of devotion or prayer.

¹ Hence Rishi is said to be for Drishi, which is from the root *drīṣ*, 'to see.' Of course, this is a mere fanciful theory. The poets themselves frequently hint that the Mantras are their own composition.

Be it noted that we have here a theory of inspiration higher even than that advanced by Muhammad in explaining the origin of the Kurān. We may also note that this idea of an eternal supernatural revelation is at the very root of Hinduism, and is, indeed, ingrained in the whole Hindu system. The first idea, however, was not that of a *written* or *book* revelation. It is very true that revealed knowledge was ultimately written down, but even then the reading of it was not encouraged.

Our first step, therefore, in attempting a description of Hinduism must be to give some notion of the contents of the Veda. To clear the ground, we begin by separating it into the following three quite distinct subdivisions, all three coming under the general head of *Śruti*, 'that which is heard or revealed'

✓ 1 *Mantra*, prayer and praise, embodied in texts and metrical hymns

✓ 2 *Brāhmaṇa*, or ritualistic precept and illustration written in prose

✓ 3 *Upanishad*, mystical or secret doctrine, appended to the aforesaid Brahmana, and written in prose and occasional verse

To begin with the Mantra portion. By *Mantra* (literally, 'the instrument of conveying thought') is meant any inspired speech or sacred text.

The term is usually applied to those prayers, invocations, and hymns which were addressed to certain deifications of the forces of nature, and ultimately arranged in five Samhitās or collections. Though some of the hymns were the property of the Āryan race before they separated, they must have been

collected and handed down to us from a period after the Indian branch of the great Indo-European race had finally settled down in the Panjab and Northern India. Sanskrit literature, embracing as it does nearly every branch of knowledge, is entirely deficient in one department. It is wholly destitute of trustworthy historical records. Hence, little or nothing is known of the lives of ancient Indian authors, and the date of their most celebrated works cannot be fixed with certainty. A fair conjecture, however, may be arrived at by comparing the most ancient with the more modern compositions, and estimating the period of time required to effect the changes of structure and idiom observable in the language. In this manner we may be justified in assuming that the hymns of the Veda were probably composed by a succession of poets at different dates between 1500 and 1000 years B C.

Though very unequal in poetical merit, and containing many tedious repetitions and puerilities, they are highly interesting and important, as embodying some of the earliest religious conceptions of the Hindus, and throwing light on the earliest history and social condition of the Indo-Āryan race.

They are comprised in five principal Samhitās, or collections of Mantras, called respectively Rīc, Yajus (containing two Samhitās, Taittirīya and Vajāsāneyīn), Sāmān, and Atharvan. Of these, the Samhita of the Rīc or Rig veda, containing 1017 hymns, is the oldest and most important. It is a collection of songs in praise of the personified elements. It is not arranged for any ritual purposes, and it includes hymns, many of

which may have been sung by our Aryan forefathers before they settled in India

The Atharva veda, on the other hand, is generally held to be the most recent, and is, perhaps, the most interesting collection. Though some of its hymns are mere repetitions of those in the Rig veda, it deserves to be called a separate original collection. It had its origin in the growth of a superstitious belief in the power of evil demons, and its verses, including those introduced from the Rig veda, are used in the present day as magical spells and incantations for imprecating or averting evils.

The two so-called Samhitās or collections of the Yajur veda or Sacrificial Veda (viz the Taittiriya and Vajasaneyin or Black and White Yajus), borrow largely from the Rig veda, and are merely hymns and texts arranged for use at sacrifices, the necessity for which arose after the complicated sacrificial system had been elaborated.

The Sama veda again is merely a reproduction of parts of the Rig veda, transposed and arranged for the Soma ceremonies performed by priests called Udgātins, as the Yajur veda was for the sacrifices performed by Adhvaryu priests¹. The greatest number of its verses are taken from the ninth Mandala of the Rig veda, which is in praise of the Soma plant.

¹ Manu, iv 123 says "The Rig veda has the gods for its deities, the Yajur veda has men for its objects, the Sama veda has the Pitris or spirits of departed ancestors, therefore its sound is impure." This semblance of impurity is said to be the result of its association with deceased persons, and its repetition at a time of mourning.

To what deities, then, did the Vedic poets address their prayers and hymns?

This is an interesting inquiry, for these were probably the very deities worshipped under similar names by our Aryan progenitors in their primeval home somewhere on the table-land of Central Asia. The answer is, they worshipped those physical forces before which all nations, if guided solely by the light of nature, have in the early period of their life instinctively bowed down, and before which even the more civilized and enlightened have always been compelled to bend in awe and reverence, if not in adoration. Their religion was what may be called in one word *physiolatry*.

To our Aryan forefathers in their Asiatic home God's power was exhibited in the forces of nature even more strikingly than to ourselves. Lands, houses, flocks, herds, men, and animals were more frequently than in Western climates at the mercy of winds, fire, and water, and the sun's rays possessed a potency quite beyond the experience of any European country. We cannot be surprised, then, that these forces were regarded as actual manifestations either of one deity in different moods or of separate rival deities contending for supremacy. Nor is it wonderful that these mighty agencies should have been at first poetically personified, and afterwards, when invested with forms, attributes, and individuality, worshipped as distinct gods. It was only natural, too, that a varying supremacy and varying honours should have been accorded to each deified force—to the air, the rain, the storm, the sun, or fire—accord

ing to the special atmospheric influences to which particular localities were exposed, or according to the seasons of the year when the dominance of each was to be prayed for or deprecated

This was the religion represented in the Vedas and was probably the primitive creed of the Indo Aryans about twelve or thirteen centuries before Christ. The first forces deified seem to have been those manifested in the sky and air. These were at first generalized under one simple but rather vague personification, as was natural in the earliest attempts at giving shape to religious ideas. In the Veda this unity soon diverged into various ramifications. Only a few of the hymns appear to contain the simple conception of one divine self-existent Being, and even in these the idea of one God present in all nature is somewhat nebulous and undefined. Perhaps the most ancient and beautiful deification was that of Dyaus, 'the sky,' as Dyaush pitar, 'Heavenly Father' (the Zeus or Jupiter of the Greeks and Romans). Then closely connected with Dyaus, was a goddess Aditi, 'the Infinite Expanse,' conceived of subsequently as the mother of all the gods. Next came a development of the same conception called Varuna, 'the Investing Sky,' said to answer to Ahura Mazda, the Ormazd of the ancient Persian (Zand) mythology, and to the Greek Ουρανός but a more spiritual conception leading to a worship which rose to the nature of a belief in the great Πάντα ἡμῶν ὁ θεὸς τοῦτος οὐρανός. This Varuna, again, was soon thought of in connection with another vague personification called Mitra (= the Persian *Mithra*) 'God of day.' After a time these imper

sonations of the celestial sphere were felt to be too vague to suit the growth of religious ideas in ordinary minds. Soon, therefore, the great investing firmament was resolved into separate cosmical entities with separate powers and attributes. First, the watery atmosphere, personified under the name of Indra, ever seeking to dispense his dewy treasures, though ever restrained by an opposing force or spirit of evil called Vritra and, secondly, the wind, thought of either as a single personality named Vayu, or as a whole assemblage of moving powers coming from every quarter of the compass, and impersonated as Maruts, or 'Storm gods'. At the same time the once purely celestial Varuna became relegated to a position among seven secondary deities of the heavenly sphere called Adityas (afterwards increased to twelve, and regarded as diversified forms of the sun in the several months of the year), and subsequently to a dominion over the waters when they had left the air and rested on the earth.

Of these separately deified physical forces by far the most favourite object of adoration was the deity supposed to yield the dew and rain. Indra is the Jupiter Pluvius of early Indian mythology, and he is the principal divinity of Vedic worshippers, if, at least, the mere number of prayers and hymns addressed to him is to be taken as an indication of his superiority.

What, however, could rain effect without the aid of heat?—a force the intensity of which must have impressed an Indian mind with awe. Hence, the second great god of Vedic worshippers and the most important

and modifications of each other, and these with different names in the later mythology were gathered into the one personification Siva. Similarly, Surya, the sun, had various forms, such as Ādityas, and one of these, named Vishnu, in the Rig veda, led to the second member of the Tri murti, while Agni, fire or heat, the great generator of life, who is called in the Rig veda 'father of the sacrifice,' and is himself said to have a triple essence, and was apparently often identified by his worshippers with the Supreme Being, easily passed into the first member of the Tri murti, Brahma, or when the worship of Brahma seemed to give place to that of ~~the~~ one aspect of this latter deity.

The following are free translations from my 'Indian Wisdom') of portions of the most remarkable hymns in the Rig veda. The ~~hymn~~ (Mandala, x. 129) attempts to describe the mystery of creation thus —

In the beginning there was neither light, nor night,
 There was neither air, nor ether above,
 What was the first verse?
 In the beginning there was nothingness,
 What was the first verse?
 The first verse was the word of God,
 Only the word of God, self-contained,
 Nought else was there, nought else above, bey-
 Then first came darkness, gloom in gloom,
 Next all was water, the primeval matter,
 In which the One lay veiled in nothingness
 Then turning towards, he gave forth force
 Of inner fervour and intense desire,
 First in his mind was formed Desire, the primal germ
 Productive which the Wise, profoundly searching, say
 Is the first subtle bond, connecting Entity
 With nullity

The one sole lord of all that is—who made
 The earth, and formed the sky, who giveth life,
 Who giveth strength, whose bidding gods revere,
 Whose hiding place is immortality,
 Whose shadow, death, who by his might is king
 Of all the breathing, sleeping waking world
 Where'er let loose in space, the mighty waters
 Have gone, depositing a fruitful seed,
 And generating fire, there *he* arose
 Who is the breath and life of all the gods,
 Whose mighty glance looks round the vast expanse
 Of watery vapour—source of energy,
 Cause of the sacrifice—the only God
 Above the gods.

Here follow portions of other hymns to Varūna,
 and to the Vedic triad, Indra, Agni, and Sūrya—

The mighty Varuna, who rules above, looks down
 Upon these worlds, his kingdom, as if close at hand
 When men imagine they do ought by stealth, he knows it
 No one can stand, or walk, or softly glide along,
 Or hide in dark recess, or lurk in secret cell,
 But Varuna detects him, and his movements smies
 Two persons may devise some plot, together sitting
 And think themselves alone; but he the king is there—
 A third—and sees it all His messengers descend
 Countless from his abode, for ever traversing
 This world, and ranging with the unaided eyes its inmates
 Whate'er ~~exists~~ within this Urth, and all within the sky,
 Yea, all that is beyond, king Varuna perceives
 The winkings of men's eyes are numbered all by him
 He wields the universe as gamblers handle dice.

Indra, twin brother of the god of fire,
 When thou wast born, thy mother Aditi,
 Gave thee, her lusty child, the thrilling draught
 Of mountain growing Soma—source of life
 And never-dying vigour to thy frame

Thou art our guardian, advocate, and friend,
 A brother, father, mother—all combined.
 Most fatherly of fathers, we are thine,
 And thou art ours. Oh ! let thy pitying soul
 Turn to us in compassion when we praise thee,
 And slay us not for one sin or for many
 Deliver us to-day, to-morrow, every day
 Vainly the demon¹ dares thy might, in vain
 Strives to deprive us of thy watery treasures
 Earth quakes beneath the crashing of thy bolts.
 Pierced, shattered lies the foe—his cities crushed,
 His armies overthrown, his fortresses
 Shivered to fragments, then the pent up waters,
 Released from long imprisonment, descend
 In torrents to the earth, and swollen rivers,
 Foaming and rolling to their ocean home,
 Proclaim the triumph of the Thunderer

Agni, thou art a sage, a priest, a king,
 Protector, father of the sacrifice
 Commissioned by us men, thou dost ascend
 A messenger, conveying to the sky
 Our hymns and offerings. Though thy origin
 Be threefold, now from air, and now from water
 Now from the mystic double Arani,
 Thou art thyself a mighty god, a lord,
 Giver of life and immortality,
 One in thy essence, but to mortals three,
 Displaying thine eternal triple form,
 As fire on earth, as lightning in the air,
 As sun in heaven. Thou art the cherished guest
 In every household—father, brother, son,
 Friend, benefactor, guardian, all in one.
 Deliver, mighty lord, thy worshippers,
 Purge us from taint of sin, and when we die,
 Deal mercifully with us on the pyre,

¹ The demon Vritra. See p. 23.

Burning our bodies with their load of guilt,
 But bearing our eternal part on high
 To luminous abodes and realms of bliss,
 For ever there to dwell with righteous men

Behold the rays of Dawn, like heralds, lead on high
 The Sun, that men may see the great all knowing god
 The stars sink off like thieves, in company with Night,
 Before the all seeing eye, whose beams reveal his presence,
 Gleaming like brilliant flames, to nation after nation
 Sūrya, with flaming locks, clear sighted god of day,
 Thy seven ruddy mares bear on thy rushing car
 With these thy self yoked steeds, seven daughters of thy chariot,
 Onward thou dost advance To thy refulgent orb,
 Beyond this lower gloom, and upward to the light
 Would we ascend, O Sun, thou god among the gods

We may add a few verses from the celebrated Purusha sūkta, one of the most recent hymns of the Rig veda (Mandala, x 90) It will serve to illustrate the gradual sliding of Hindū monotheism into pantheism, and the first foreshadowing of the idea of sacrifice, as well as the institution of caste,¹ which for so many centuries has held India in bondage —

The embodied spirit has a thousand heads,
 A thousand eyes, a thousand feet, around
 On every side enveloping the earth,
 Yet filling space no larger than a span
 He is himself this very universe,
 He is whatever is has been, and shall be,
 He is the lord of immortality
 All creatures are one-fourth of him, three fourths

¹ This hymn (generally admitted to be a comparatively modern production) is the only hymn in the Rig veda which alludes to the distinctions of caste.

Are that which is immortal in the sky
 From him, called Purusha, was⁹born Viraj,
 And from Virāj was Purusha produced,
 Whom gods and holy men made their oblation
 With Purusha as victim, they performed
 A sacrifice When they divided him,
 How did they cut him up? What was his mouth?
 What were his arms⁹ and what his thighs and feet?
 The Brahman was his mouth the kingly soldier
 Was made his arms the husbandman his thighs,
 The servile Sudra⁹ issued from his feet

Be it observed, in conclusion, that the above examples would, if taken alone, encourage a very false estimate of the merits of the Vedic Mantras. Although the majority of the Hindūs believe that the several Samhitas of the Veda, and especially that of the Rig veda, contain all that is good, great, and divine, yet these collections of hymns will be found, when taken as a whole, to abound more in puerile ideas than in striking thoughts and lofty conceptions. Nor will they be found to support any of those objectionable practices, superstitions, and opinions of the present day for which they were once, through ignorance of their contents, supposed to be an authority. The Vedic hymns contain no allusion to the doctrine of transmigration of souls, which is a conspicuous characteristic of the Hindū creed in the later system. Nor do they afford any sanction to the prohibition of widow marriages, the encouragement of child marriages, the iron rules of caste, and the interdiction of foreign travel. Nor is there in them any evidence that the personifications of the forces of nature were represented by images or symbols carved out of wood

or stone. On the contrary, it may be taken as almost certain that there were no idols and no temples to hold images in Vedic times.

That the social condition of the people was by no means low and that they had attained to some degree of civilization, may be inferred from various allusions in the hymns. It is evident that the chief riches of the newly arrived Indo-Āryans consisted in flocks and herds, that they understood the principles of agriculture, that they were able to build towns and fortified places, that they had some knowledge of various arts and sciences and of working in metals, that they engaged in philosophical speculations, that they had rulers, that they were separated into classes, though they were not yet divided off by hard lines of caste, that polygamy existed though monogamy was the rule, that they killed animals for sacrifices, that they were in the habit of eating animal food, and did not even object to the flesh of cows, that they were fond of gambling, and indulged in intoxicating beverages.

CHAPTER III

THE BRĀHMANAS AND THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

HAVING thus endeavoured to explain the nature of the Vedic hymns, we now turn to the second division of the Veda called Brahmana, which, in relation to the rise of Brahmanical authority, the elaboration of the idea of sacrifice, and the development of the ritual, is more important than the Mantra portion

{What, then, are the Brahmanas?

They are intended, as their name implies, for the Brāhmins, and especially for their use in conducting the complicated sacrificial ceremonies. Just as the Mantras are the representatives of the nature worship of the Rishis which was developed in the Panjab, so the Brahmanas are the exponents of the ritualism of the Brahmins, developed when they had settled in North western Hindustān.

Their chief aim is to serve as guides or directories for the employment of the Mantras at sacrifices. But they do more than this. They speculate as to the meaning and effect of using particular verses and metres, and give explanations of the origin, import, and conduct of the sacrifices, frequently intermixing illustrations in the shape of legends and old stories. The rambling discursiveness of these compositions (the oldest of which may have been written in the

seventh century B C) made them practically useless as directories to the ritual until they themselves were furnished with guides in the form of Sūtras or aphoristic rules¹

Each of the Śaṃhitās, or collections of Mantras, has its own Brahmanas. Thus the Rīgveda has the Aitareya brahmana (perhaps the oldest) and the Kauśītaki (or Śaṅkhyāyana) brahmana. The two collections of the Yajurveda have the Taittiriya brahmana and the Śatipatha brahmana, which last, belonging to the Vjāsaneya śaṃhita, is perhaps one of the most complete of these productions. The Sāmaveda has eight Brāhmanas, of which the two best known are the Praudha (= Pañcaviṃśa, Tāndya) and the Shadviṃśa. The Atharvaveda has the Gopatha brahmana.

Though much of the matter of these treatises is little better than the silliest sacerdotalism, yet they furnish valuable materials to any one interested in tracing the rise and progress of Brahmanism, and the development of its sacrificial system.

We may observe that the division of the people into the four great classes of *Brāhmanas*, priests,

¹ These were called Kalpa or Śrauta sūtras. Others, which were guides to domestic ceremonies, were called Smārta or Grhya sūtras (see p 15). The word Sūtra is derived from the root *śr*, 'to sew,' and means 'a string of rules.' A Sūtra should properly be expressed with the utmost possible brevity. It is frequently nothing but a few suggestive memorial words used like algebraic signs, and unintelligible without a key. In later times Sūtra works are merely collections of formulated precepts, adapted to serve as manuals to particular systems of teaching, whether in ritual, philosophy, law, or grammar.

Kshatriyas, soldiers, *Vaiśyas*, agriculturists, and *Sudras*, servants,—as foreshadowed in the *Purusha sūkta* of the *Rig veda* (see p 30),—was at this period more thoroughly established, though the rules of caste as laid down in the laws of *Manu* (see p 57) were not yet generally in force. It may be noted, too, that the *Brahmanas* express belief in a future state more positively than the *Mantras*. They assert that a recompense awaits all beings in the next world according to their conduct in this. But the doctrine of transmigration, which became afterwards an essential element of *Hinduism*, is not yet fully developed, though hinted at in the *Śatapatha brāhmaṇa* (vi 6 1 1)¹

One of the most remarkable ideas to be found in the *Brahmanas* is that the gods were merely mortals till they extorted immortality from the Supreme Being by sacrifices and austerities. This is expressed in the following free translation of a passage of the *Śatapatha brāhmaṇa* —

The god is lived constantly in dread of Death—

The mighty Ender—so with toilsome rites

They worshipped and repeated sacrifices

Till they became immortal. Then the Ender

Said to the gods, 'As ye have made yourselves
Imperishable, so will men endeavour

* To free themselves from me, what portion then

Shall I possess in man?' The gods replied,

'Henceforth no being shall become immortal

In his own body, this his mortal frame

¹ Animals and plants are described as revenging, in a future state of existence, injuries inflicted on them by men in this life.

Shalt thou still seize, this shall remain thy own
 He who through knowledge or religious acts
 Henceforth attains to immortality
 Shall first present his body, Death, to thee ’

And again in the Taittiriya brahmana,—‘ By means of the sacrifice the gods obtained heaven ’

But a still more remarkable conception is that first found in the Purusha sukta of the Rig veda, already quoted, which represents the gods as sacrificing *Purusha*, the primeval Male, supposed to be coeval with the Creator

This idea is even more remarkably developed in the Tandya brahmanas thus —

‘ The lord of creatures (*prajā pati*) offered himself a sacrifice for the gods ’

And again, in the Śatapatha brahmana, ‘ He who, knowing this, sacrifices with the *Purusha medha*, or sacrifice of the primeval male, becomes everything ’

Surely, in these mystical allusions to the sacrifice of a representative man, we may perceive traces of the original institution of sacrifice as a divinely appointed ordinance typical of the one great voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God for the sins of the world ¹

Whether they point to the actual sacrifice of human beings as part of the early Indo Āryan system, admits of question Doubtless the practice of human sacrifice was eventually introduced, and both children

¹ Professor Banerjee (p. 204 of his ‘ Aryan Witness ’) thinks that it would not be easy to account for the genesis of such an idea, except on the assumption of some primitive tradition of the ‘ Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ’

and adults were immolated as victims at the altars of the bloody goddess Kali in her numerous local forms. Such sacrifices were once regarded as the only means of propitiating her on occasions of great public calamities, when she was supposed to send blight, disease, and pestilence, and for a long period they continued to be secretly, if not openly, perpetrated in certain districts of India. They were, at any rate, extensively prevalent among the wild and uncultivated Dravidian and aboriginal tribes, many of whose practices were adopted by the Hindus, and contributed largely to mould the Vedic religion into its subsequent form.

That human sacrifice was not at least unknown at the time the *Aitareya brahman* was composed is indicated by the story of *Śunahsepha*, of which the following is the briefest possible epitome —

King Harisandra had no son. He then prayed to Varuna, promising that if a son were born to him, he would sacrifice the child to the god. Then a son was born to him called Rohita. When Rohita was grown up his father one day told him of the vow he had made to Varuna and bade him prepare to be sacrificed. The son objected to be killed, and ran away from his father's house. For six years he wandered in the forest and at last met a starving Brahman. Him he persuaded to sell one of his sons named *Śunahsepha*, for a hundred cows. This boy was bought by Rohita and taken to Harisandra and about to be sacrificed to Varuna as a substitute for Rohita, when on praying to the gods with verses from the Veda, he was released by them.

Nevertheless, it is clear from the following passage in the same *Brāhman* that the sacrifice of human beings was really so repugnant to Aryan instincts

that it did not long retain the direct sanction of the Brahmins —

The gods killed a man for their victim. But from him thus killed, the part which was fit for a sacrifice went out and entered a horse. Thence, the horse became an animal fit for being sacrificed. * The gods then killed the horse, but the part of it for being sacrificed went out of it and entered an ox. The gods then killed the ox, but the part of it fit for being sacrificed went out of it and entered a sheep. Thence it entered a goat. The sacrificial part remained for the longest time in the goat, thence, it became pre-eminently fit for being sacrificed †

This passage indicates that whatever the actual practice may have been—the desire of the Brahmins was to abolish human sacrifice, and substitute in its place the sacrifice of animals, four kinds of which are enumerated—horses, oxen, sheep, and goats,—in the regular order of their fitness for immolation—according to some inherent efficacy in each class¹. It is remarkable that in Vedic times, even a cow (called *amṣṭarāṇī*), was sometimes killed,² and goats, as is well known, are still sacrificed to the goddess Kālī.

In the Rig veda, the *Aśva medha* or 'horse-sacrifice,' is made an important ceremony, and hymns 162 and 163 in Mandala I were used at this rite, which was regarded as the chief of all animal sacrifices.

Indeed, it is essential to a clear comprehension of Brahmanism and Hinduism, that the exact nature and

¹ In the Vājasaneyi Samhita of the White Yajur veda two hundred and ten different kinds of victims for sacrifice are enumerated. In *Manu* v 42 it is stated that animals duly sacrificed are conveyed to heavenly mansions.

² The killing of a cow and burning it with the body of a deceased person is described by *Aśvalayana*.

meaning of sacrifice, as employed by the Hindūs, should be impressed on the mind at the very outset. The idea of the need of sacrificial acts of some kind, is ingrained in their whole system. It is one of the earliest that appears in Indian religious works, and no literature—not even the Jewish—contains so many words relating to sacrifice as Sanskrit. But the oldest form of Vedic sacrifice was not peculiar. It consisted in the mere dedication of offerings of food to the gods. This was generally done by oblations of butter, &c., in fire, or by pouring out libations of the juice of the Soma plant, which were supposed to nourish and exhilarate the deities, especially Indra.¹ In fact, one object of a Hindu's sacrifices and oblations, whether in Vedic or post Vedic times, has always been, and still continues to be, the supposed actual nourishment of the gods, by the aroma or essence of the substances offered,² food being regarded as a necessity of their being.³ Thus, in the Vishnu purana we read, 'By sacrifices the gods are nourished'

¹ There are two Sanskrit roots for 'to sacrifice' *dhru* (=an older *dhru*=*dhru*) and *yu*. The first is restricted to oblations of clarified butter in fire, the latter, which means 'to worship,' is applied to sacrificing generally. Besides these two roots the root *su* is used for offering libations with the juice of the Soma.

² The spirits of departed ancestors are also supposed to be refreshed and nourished by libations of water, and offerings of food (Manu, iii. 237)

³ Sleep seems also necessary to them. From a particular day in the month Āshāṭha to a particular day in Kārtika the gods are supposed to sleep. Vishnu wakes up on the eleventh day of the light half of Kārtika. Indra is said to rise on the new moon of Āsvina, celebrated as *Sakrotthana*, and before Durgā is worshipped at the autumnal Durgā puja she must be

But the idea of expiation was gradually introduced even in Vedic times. The sacrificer was mystically identified with the victim, which was regarded as the ransom for sin, and the instrument of its annulment. In the Tandyā brahmana, we read,—

O thou limb of the victim now consigned to the fire, thou art the expiation for sins committed by the gods, by the fathers (our deceased ancestors), by men, by ourselves. Whatever sin we have committed, sleeping or waking, knowing or unknowing, thou art the expiation for that.

And here we have to note a third object of sacrifice. Besides the wish to nourish the gods with the savour of the material substances offered, and besides the desire for expiation, resulting from substituted suffering, the sacrificer might have a third aim. It was believed possible by sacrifice to acquire super human power, and to wrest from the gods any desired boon, or object of ambition, however difficult of attainment. This could also be effected through the practice of austerities, but wealthy individuals who had large resources in money and priests at command, relied more on the efficacy of particular sacrifices (such as the Jyotishtoma, Agnishtoma, Vajapeya, &c.), elaborately conducted by Brahmins with the punctilious observance of a complicated ritual, and the distribution of largesses to the officiating priests. According to the popular creed, a hundred horse-sacrifices so conducted, exalted the sacrificer to the rank of a powerful deity, and even entitled him to displace Indra himself from

awaked, and a ceremony called *Bathana*, 'arousing of the goddess,' takes place. On the other hand, one of the characteristics of the gods is said to be that they never wink.

the dominion of heaven. Hence, the very gods for whose nourishment and propitiation sacrifices were intended, were thought to be jealous of over zeal displayed by pious individuals in multiplying sacrificial rites, and were even said to put impediments in their way. Nevertheless, in spite of such supposed opposition to excessive piety, the number of sacrificers and sacrifices of all kinds, increased in India.

In fact, for the whole Brāhmana period of Hindūism (probably from 800 to 500 B.C.), the need of propitiatory offerings through the oblation of food in fire and immolation of animals remained a central doctrine of Brahmanism. Thousands of animals were killed every day. The land was saturated with blood. The greater the number of the sacrifices and the more elaborate the ritual, the greater the need for a more complete organization of priests. In this manner the whole Brāhmanical sacrificial system, of which the Brāhmana portion of the Veda is the expression and exponent, was overdone. People became wearied and disgusted with sacrifices, sacrificers, and sacrificing priests.

Then, about five centuries before our era, the reformer Buddha appeared, and about contemporaneously with him various Brahman sages, stimulated by his example and perhaps by that of others who preceded him,¹ thought out what are called the orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy. The bolder reformers found ready listeners when they began to

¹ There is no reason for supposing that the Buddha was the first freethinker and philosopher that India produced. He himself taught that other Buddhas had preceded him.

preach the impossibility of vicarious suffering, the transmigration of souls, the necessity that every man should suffer himself, and in his own person, for his own sins, either in this or future lives, the unity of all being, the identity of the human soul with the Divine, and the consequent absurdity of caste distinctions. All idea of the need of propitiatory sacrifice was by them rejected, for when every man was believed to be a part of God, what necessity was there that God should propitiate Himself? If a portion of the One Universal Soul chose for a time to ignore itself, to enclose itself in a body, to fetter itself with actions and their inevitable results, the consequent suffering could only be borne by itself in its passage through numerous existences, and there could be no release—no final emancipation—till action ceased, and the consciousness of identity with the one universal soul returned. Hence the gradual diminution of animal sacrifices throughout India, except at the altars of the fierce goddess Kali or Durga, who is supposed to delight in blood, and, if satiated by the immolation of goats and buffaloes, to abstain from causing further destruction. But at no other temples are victims now killed, and even such propitiatory slaughtering of animals is utterly repugnant to the present feelings and opinions of the educated Hindus. Such was the great revolution effected by Buddha and the Brahman philosophers together.

It will be necessary to give fuller consideration to the new ideas thus introduced into Brahmanism. But before describing them more in detail, we must first glance at the third or Upanishad portion of the Veda, which was really the source whence the springs

CHAPTER IV

THE UPANISHADS AND BRAHMANICAL PHILOSOPHY

THE third division of the Veda is called *Upanishad*, which implies something that underlies the surface. The doctrine contained in these treatises does in fact lie under the whole Hindu system. Not only are the Upanishads as much *Śruti*, or 'revelation' as the Mantra and Brahmana portion of the Veda, but they are practically the only part of the Veda much studied and appealed to by educated Hindus in the present day.

To understand this we must bear in mind that Indian authorities separate the Veda into two divisions. The first is called *Karma Land*: 'the department of works'. This embraces both Mantra and Brahmana, and is for that vast majority of persons who are unable to conceive of religion, except as a process of laying up merit by prayers, sacrifices, rites, and austerities. For these the one God assumes various forms, to any of which worship may be addressed and honour paid.

The second is called *Jnana Land*—'the department of knowledge'. This is taught in the Upanishads, and is for that select few who are capable of understanding the true doctrine.

We have already seen (p. 11) that the creed of the man who is said to possess the true knowledge is singularly simple. He believes that there is but one

real Being in the universe, which Being also constitutes the universe.

This pantheistic doctrine is everywhere traceable in some of the more ancient Upanishads, though often wrapped up in mysticism and allegory. A list of about 150 of these treatises is given, most of which are written in prose with occasional variations in verse. The absence of historical records in India makes it impossible to fix the date of any of them with more certainty than that of the Mantras. Their style is however, less archaic, and not very different from that of classical Sanskrit. Some of the more ancient are probably as old as the sixth century B.C. These are appended to the *Āranyakas*—certain chapters of the *Brahmanas*, so awe-inspiring and profound, that they were required to be read in the solitude of forests. Properly each *Brahman* had its *Āranyakas*, but the philosophical ideas they contained were so mixed up with extraneous subjects that the chapters called Upanishads were added with the object of investigating more definitely such abstruse problems as the origin of the universe, the nature of the deity, the nature of the human soul, and the reciprocal connexion of spirit and matter.

The names of the ten most important Upanishads are the *Iśa* (actually attached to the 40th chapter of the *Vājasaneyi samhita*¹), *Kena*, and *Chandogya* (of the *Sama veda*), and *Katha*, *Pralna*, *Mundaka*, *Māṇḍūkya* (of the *Atharva veda*) *Bṛihad-aranyaka* (at

¹ I was told by a great Pandit that this was the only Upanishad entitled to be called *apara vidya* i.e. not written by men.

tached to the *Satapatha brahmana*) *Atitareya* (belonging to the Rig veda), *Tutturīya* (belonging to the black Yajur veda)

It is interesting to trace the rudiments of the later philosophy amid the labyrinth of mystical ideas and puerile conceits which bewilder the reader of the Upanishads. They are the link connecting the Brahmanas with the Darśanas or regular philosophical systems, their connexion with the former being shown by the frequent allusions to sacrificial rites. But they rise to a far higher level than the Brahmanas, and in some of them striking thoughts, original ideas, and lofty language redeem the absurdities of the mysticism.

The following literal translation of part of the *Īśa Upanishad* (regarded as one of the most important) will afford a good example of the pantheistic doctrines of Brāhmanism, as they first emerge in this portion of Indian sacred literature —

{ Whate'er exists within this universe
Is all to be regarded as enveloped
By the great Lord, as if wrapped in a vesture
There is one only Being who exists
Unmoved, yet moving swifter than the mind,
Who far outstrips the senses, though as gods
They strive to reach him, who himself at rest
Transcends the fleetest flight of other beings,
Who, like the air, supports all vital action.
He moves, yet moves not, he is far, yet near
He is within this universe. Whoe'er beholds
All living creatures as in him and him—
The universal Spirit—as in all,
Henceforth regards no creature with contempt.

We now pass on to a brief notice of the actual

systems of philosophy These are not regarded as part of Śruti or Revelation

They are sometimes called the Shat Śāstras or 'Six Instruments of True Teaching,' sometimes the Shat Darśanas, or 'Six Demonstrations of Truth' They had not shaped themselves into separate schools at the period when we may suppose the present version of Manu's law book to have been drawn up in the fifth century B C As, however, the six Darśanas grew directly out of the Upanishads, and as most of their doctrines preceded, or were contemporaneous with the compilation of Manu's laws, the names of the six schools may here be enumerated.

They are,—1 The *Māyā*, founded by Gotama, 2 The *Vaiśeṣika*, by Kanada, 3 The *Sāṅkhya*, by Kapila, 4 The *Yoga*, by Patanjali, 5 The *Mīmāṃsā*, by Jaimini, 6 The *Vedānta*, by Badarayana or Vyasa

They were delivered in Sūtras or aphorisms, which are held to be the basis of all subsequent teaching under each head (see note p. 34)

The date of the composition of these aphorisms cannot be settled with certainty Nor is it possible to decide when the six schools were finally systematized, nor which of the six preceded the other Some of them are dualistic (affirming the co-existence of two eternal principles), some non-dualistic (insisting on the unity of all being) Their distinctive features are explained in the Appendix Our present concern is with those lines of metaphysical speculation which preceded the formulation of distinct philosophical creeds.

It seems tolerably certain that about five or six centuries before the commencement of the Christian era, a mighty stir took place in thinking minds throughout the then civilized world. Thus, when Buddha arose in India, Greece had her thinkers in the followers of Pythagoras. Persia in those of Zoroaster, China in those of Confucius. Men began to ask themselves earnestly such questions as—What am I? Whence have I come? Whither am I going? How can I explain my consciousness of personal existence? What is the relationship between my material and immaterial nature? What is this world in which I find myself? How can I explain the deepest mystery of nature—the history of creation? Did a wise good, and all powerful Being create the world out of nothing? or did it evolve itself out of an eternal germ? or did it come together by a fortuitous concurrence of eternal atoms? If created by a Being of infinite wisdom how can I account for the inequalities of condition in it—good and evil, happiness and misery? Has the creator form or is he formless? Has he any qualities or none?

Certainly in India no satisfactory solution of questions such as these was to be found in the prayers and hymns of the ancient Indo-Aryan poets which though called Veda or 'knowledge' by the Brahmans, did not even profess to furnish any real knowledge on these points but merely gave expression to the first gropings of the human mind searching for truth by the uncertain light of natural phenomena.

Nor did the ritualistic Brahmanas contribute any thing to the elucidation of such topics. They merely encouraged the growth of a superstitious belief in the

efficacy of sacrifices, and fostered the increasing dependence of the multitude on a mediatorial caste of priests, supposed to be the constituted medium of communication between men and gods. Still these momentous questions pressed for solution, and the minds of men finding no rest in mere traditional revelation, and no satisfaction in mere external rites, turned inwards, each thinker endeavouring to think out for himself the great problems of life by the aid of his own reason. Hence were composed the mystical Upanishads already described. Be it remembered that these treatises were not regarded as antagonistic to revelation but rather as complementary of it. They were held to be an integral portion of the Veda, and even its loftiest utterance—the apex to which all previous revelation tended. Probably the simple fact was, that as it was found impossible to preclude the Kṣatriyas and other inferior classes from rationalistic inquiry, the Brāhmins, with their usual astuteness, determined on making it their own, and dignifying its first development in the Upanishads with the title of Veda.

Brahmanism and rationalistic philosophy, therefore, advanced hand in hand. Any Brahman might become a philosopher, provided he gave a nominal assent to the Veda. But if a Kshatriya free thinker, like Buddha, asserted that any one might be a teacher of philosophy, or might gain emancipation for himself, irrespectively of the Veda or of the Brāhmins, he was at once denounced as an infidel.

Such unbelieving free thinkers soon became numerous in India. For, in truth, a process of action and

reaction has marked the whole course of Hinduism. The heretical Buddhist movement (more fully described in chapter vi) was nothing but a natural reaction from the tyranny of Brahmanism and caste. It was like the return swing of a pendulum to which an impulse was given by one great and enlightened man. It was a rebound from excessive intolerance to the broadest tolerance. It was the name for unfettered religious thought asserting itself without fear of consequences.

The orthodox schools of philosophy, on the other hand, were the homes of those rationalists who sacrificed honesty at the shrine of Brahmanical respectability. These schools went through the form of acknowledging the authority of the Veda. Yet two at least of the six, which taught the eternal distinctness of spirit and matter, viz the *Vaiśeṣika* and *Sāṃkhya*, proceeded almost to the same length with Buddhism, even to the practical ignoring of a supreme intelligent creator.

Leaving these points to be explained more fully in the Appendix, let us briefly trace the common lines of philosophical thought growing directly out of the Upanishads. This common creed is clearly indicated in Manu's law book, and even at the present day may be detected underlying the faith of most thinking Hindus, to whatever sect or system they may nominally belong.

This common philosophical creed, then, asserts —

1. The eternity of the soul, both retrospectively and prospectively.

Soul is regarded as of two kinds — a the supreme universal soul (variously called *Paramātma*, *Brahman*, *Puruṣa*, &c.)

2 The personal individual soul of living beings, called *Jivatman*. If any entity is eternal it can have had no beginning or it must have an end. Hence souls both universal and individual, whether they be regarded as different or identical, have always existed and must ever exist.

2 The eternity of the matter or substance out of which the universe has been evolved.

Note that this evolution may take place, according to some materialists, from gross particles of matter, or, as in the Vedanta system, from soul itself when overspread by illusion. This is a result of that fixed dogma of a Hindu philosopher's belief—*na vastuno vastusiddhik, ex nihilo nihil fit*,—nothing can be produced out of nothing.

3 The soul, though itself abstract thought and knowledge, can only exercise thought, consciousness, sensation, and cognition, and indeed can only act and will when connected with external objects of sensation, invested with some bodily form, and joined to mind (*mānas*).

For observe that mind is an internal organ of sense, a sort of inlet of thought into the soul, belonging only to the body, and quite as distinct from the soul as any external organ of the body.

4 The union of soul and body is productive of bondage, and, in the case of human souls, of misery.

For note that the soul, so united, becomes conscious of personal existence and individuality, and is capable of receiving impressions pleasurable or painful. Then it commences acting, but all action, good or bad, leads to bondage because it entails a consequence, according to the maxim *Ataḥam eṣa bhoktavyam kṛitam karma subhataśāntam*, 'When an action, good or bad, has been committed, its fruit must of necessity be eaten.' Hence.

if an act be good it must be rewarded, and if bad it must be punished

5 In order to accomplish the working out of the consequences, or ripenings of acts (*karma ripaka*), the soul must be removed to a place of reward or punishment, which reward or punishment, however, is neither full and effectual nor final

For observe that the heavens of the Hindū system are only steps on the road to final beatitude, and the hells, though places of terrible torture,¹ are merely temporary purgatories

The soul must leave these and return to corporeal existence, migrating into higher, intermediate, and lower forms, according to its shades of merit or demerit, and as it progresses towards emancipation from separate existence, passing through the four stages of bliss called *sālokya*, living in the same heaven with God, *sāmlhya*, nearness to God, *sarupya*, assimilation to the likeness of God, till the great end of *sāyujya*, or complete union with the Supreme, has been attained

6 The transmigration of the soul, through an innumerable succession of bodies,² is the true explanation of the existence of evil in the world

For note that misery, disease, depravity, inequality of fortune, and diversity of character, good or bad, are simply the consequences of acts done by each soul of its own free will in former

¹ Twenty-one in number See note 2 to p. 66 of 'Indian Wisdom.' (Allen & Co.)

² The popular theory is that every being must pass through eighty-four lakhs of births, a lakh being one hundred thousand.

bodies, which acts exert on that soul an irresistible power, very significantly called *Adṛśāṇa*, because felt and 'not seen.' Hence the soul has to bear the consequences of its own actions only, being tossed hither and thither by a force set in motion by itself, but which can never be guarded against, because its operation depends on deeds committed in former lives quite beyond control, and even unremembered.

From a consideration of the above six essential elements of Brāhmanical philosophy we find that its one great aim is to teach men to abstain from action of every kind, good or bad, as much from liking as from disliking, as much from loving as from hating, and even from indifference. Actions are the setters of the embodied soul, which when it has shaken off, it will lose all sense of individual personality and return to the condition of simple soul. This constitutes *Pramā* or true knowledge; this is the *sumimum bonum* of Brāhmanism; this is the only real bliss—the loss of repeated separate existences by complete absorption (*sāyujja*) into the only really existing Being, who is wholly unfettered by action, and without qualities of any kind (*nirguna*), and called *sat-ctid-ānanda*,¹ because he is pure life (with nothing, however, to live for), pure thought (with nothing to think about), pure joy (with nothing to rejoice about).

¹ This is the trinity of Brāhmanical philosophy.

CHAPTER V

BRAHMANICAL LAW, DOMESTIC USAGES, AND CASTE

HAVING traced the first rise and development of Brahmanical philosophy, we shall be better prepared to enter on that phase of Brahmanism which resulted from the growth of scepticism, viz the substitution of social and domestic usages,—varying according to caste and tribe,—in place of public ritual and sacrifices.

Of this period, the *Grihya* sutras, and the *Dharma śāstras*, or law books of Manu and of Yajñvalkyā, are the best exponents.

The *Grihya* sutras are collections of aphoristic rules, which are only distinguished from the *Śrauta* sutras of the *Kalpa Vedāṅga* (see p. 15) because they do not relate to *Śrauta* or Vedic sacrifices so much as to domestic rites. The law book of Manu, which may be assigned in its present form to about the fifth century B.C., is a metrical version of the traditional observances of a tribe of Brāhmins called *Manavas*, who probably belonged to a school of the black Yajur vedā and lived in the north west of India, not far from Delhi, which observances were originally embodied in their *Grihya* sutras. To these *Sūtras* many precepts on religion, morality, and philosophy were added by an author or authors unknown, the whole being collected in more recent times by a Brahman or Brah

mans, who, to give weight and dignity to the collection, assigned its authorship to the mythical sage Manu.

Without attempting to determine the real authorship or to settle the exact date of the present compilation, we may safely affirm that the well known collection of precepts commonly called 'the code of Manu' is perhaps the oldest and most sacred Sanskrit work after the Veda and its Śrūta sutras. Although standing in a manner at the head of *Smṛiti*, or post Vedic literature, it is connected with the Veda through these Sūtras, as the philosophical Darśanas are through the Upanishads. Even if not the oldest of post Vedic writings, it is certainly the most interesting both as presenting a picture of the usages, manners, and intellectual condition of an important part of the Hindū race at a remote period, and as revealing the exaggerated nature of the rules by which the Brahmans sought to perpetuate an organized caste system in subordination to themselves. At the same time, it is in other respects perhaps one of the most remarkable books that the literature of the whole world can offer, and some of its moral precepts are worthy of Christianity itself.

The compilation as now presented to us is an irregular compendium of rules which were probably in force in a particular part of India for a long period of time, and were handed down orally. It is tolerably certain that the whole of India was never under one government. Some few powerful monarchs are known to have acquired sovereignty over very extensive territories, and were then called Cakravartins, but we must not suppose that the term 'Code,' as applied to

Manu's law book, is intended to denote a systematic arrangement of laws actually prevalent over the whole of such territories. In later times it became the basis of Hindu jurisprudence, but it was long before it worked its way to acceptance with the entire Hindu community, and although this law book has now secured for itself a degree of reverence throughout the whole of India, only second to that accorded to the Veda, it was, without doubt, originally a mere local collection.

It will be found that, after eliminating the purely religious and philosophical precepts, the greater number of its rules fall under the following four heads —

1. *Ācāra*, 'immemorial practices,' which are described as *Siddhānta*, 'approved practices,' sanctioned by the Veda and by Smṛiti, if they are those which prevailed between the two sacred rivers, Sarasvatī and Drishadvatī, in the region called *Brahmavarta*. These in fact, include all the observances of caste, regarded as constituting the highest law and highest religion.

2. *Dharmaśāstra*, 'practices of law and government,' embracing the procedure of legal tribunals, rules of judicature and civil and criminal law.

3. *Pratyakṣa*, 'penitential exercises,' comprehending rules of expiation.

4. *Karma phala*, 'consequences of acts,' especially as involving repeated births through numberless existences, until the attainment of final beatitude.

Since the precepts under these four heads were framed by men who were Brahmans of the Mānava school, it is only natural that they should have especial reference to the life of Brahmans, the regulations for which engross six books, and are besides introduced

everywhere throughout the other six. But as the Brahman could not be supported in his pretensions without the strong arm of the Kshatriya, or military class, a large portion of the work is devoted to the definition of the Kshatriya's duties and an exaggerated delineation of the kingly character and office, while the Vaisyas or agriculturists, and Śūdras or servants, though essential to Manu's *Caturvarṇya* or fourfold social system, as well as the mixed classes, are little noticed. Here is an epitome of the twelve books —

After an account of the creation of the world in the first book, the four stages of a Brāhman's life are the only subjects treated of in regular order in the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth books, four books being devoted to the duties of the religious student and married householder, and the sixth book treating of the last two stages of anchorage and religious mendicant.

The seventh and eighth books propound the rules of government, principally, of course, for the guidance of the second great class or Kshatriyas, from which the king was chosen. The ninth book contains precepts on the subject of women, husband and wife, their offspring and the law of inheritance and division of property, with additional rules for kings, and a few precepts relative to the two remaining principal castes. It also describes the employments to which the several classes are restricted, and states the occupations permitted to Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Śūdras in times of exigency and distress. The eleventh book gives rules of expiation, both for the sins of the present life—especially sins against caste—and for the effects of offences committed in previous bodies, as shown in congenital diseases, &c. The twelfth continues the subject of the recompenses or consequences of acts, good or bad, as leading to reward in heaven or punishment in various hells, and to triple degrees of transmigration. It closes with directions as to the best means of obtaining final beatitude and absorption into the universal essence.

The simplicity of Manu's organization of classes, if it be not merely theoretical, bears witness to the great antiquity of a portion of the code. According to Book X 3, 4, there are only four pure classes, as follow —

The Brāhman, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya constitute the three twice born classes (as receiving a second spiritual birth through investiture with the sacred thread), the Sūdra is once born, and constitutes the fourth class, there is no fifth class. From priority of birth, from superiority of origin (in being sprung from the mouth of the Creator), from possession of the Veda (i.e. from the right of repeating, teaching, and expounding it), and from a distinction in the reception of the sacrificial thread (as the most important of the twelve Sanskāras or purificatory rites) the Brahman is the lord of all classes.

A Brahman whether learned or unlearned, is a mighty divinity just as fire is a mighty divinity, whether consecrated or unconsecrated (iv. 317).

In the tenth book, however, we have a more developed social system depicted, and a number of mixed castes are described as resulting from the intermarriage of the pure classes. They have a variety of names, such as *Murdhavanikta*, *Mahishya*, *Karana* or *Kāya stha*, *Ambastha* or *Vaidya*, *Ājagara*, *Dhigvāna*, *Pukkasa*, *Candala*, and are restricted to particular occupations.

The superiority of the Brahmans in the Hindu lawyer's scheme is the hinge on which the whole social system turns.

The Brahmans are supposed to constitute the great central body, around which all other classes and orders of beings revolve like satellites. Not only are they invested with divine dignity, but they are bound together by the most stringent rules, while the other three classes of soldiers, agriculturists, and servants

are made powerless for combined resistance by equally stringent regulations, one class being separated from the other by insurmountable barriers

It was found indeed necessary to conciliate the Kshatriya class. The most exalted eulogies were lavished on kings, but Brahmans were to act as their advisers, and to have much of the judicial authority and interpretation of the laws in their own hands, and were always theoretically superior in rank—a circumstance which led in the end to jealousies, feuds, and bloody contests between the first two classes. Certain privileges also naturally fell to the Vaisya, and both they and the Kshatriyas were equally with the Brahmans entitled to the appellation *Dvija*, 'twice born'. Their whole status, however, depended upon various domestic rites, to the due conduct of which the superintendence of Brahmans was indispensable.

In short, the distinction of caste and the inherent superiority of one class over the three others were thought to be as much a law of nature and a matter of divine appointment as the creation of separate classes of animals, with insurmountable differences of physical constitution, such as elephants, lions, horses, and dogs.

When the increase of the Brahmanical class compelled the secularization of many of its members, they were allowed to engage in the occupations of the other classes. Practice and theory then became very different, and in later times caste distinctions separated the Brāhmans themselves, so that separate tribes adopted separate usages. It is essential, however, that the original theory of the life of a Brahman

as laid down by Manu should be clearly understood. It may be described as follows —

Every Brāhman had to pass through four Āśramas, or conditions of life, that is to say, his life was divided into four periods according as he became successively,—1 Unmarried student (*brahma carin*), 2 Married householder (*griha stha*), 3 Anchorite (*vānaprastha*), 4 Religious devotee (*bhikshu* or *parivrājaka* or *sannyasin*)

As unmarried student the young Brahman was to reside with his preceptor until he had gained a thorough knowledge of the three Vedas. Very noteworthy are the twelve Sanskaras or 'purificatory rites,' which purify a man from the taint of sin derived from his parents, and are enjoined with certain variations on all the three first classes alike. They are as follow —

- 1 *Garbhādāna* or *garbha lambhant*, 'ceremony on conception', 2 *Punsavana*, on the first indication of a living male's conception, 3 *Simantonnayana*, arranging the parting of the mother's hair in the fourth, sixth, or eighth month of pregnancy, 4 *Jata karman*, touching an infant's tongue with honey and ghee thrice at birth, 5 *Anna karana*, giving a name on the tenth or twelfth day after birth, 6 *Nishkramana*, taking out the child in the fourth month to see the sun, 7 *Anna prasana*, feeding it with rice between the fifth and eighth month, 8 *Cudākarman*, or *śaula*, tonsure of the hair, except one lock, on the crown of the head, in the third year, 9 *Upanayana*, induction into the order of a twice born man by investiture with the sacred cord, 10 *Kelānta*, cutting off the hair, performed on a Brahman in his sixteenth year, on a Kshatriya in his twenty second, on a Vaisya in his twenty fourth, 11 *Samavartana*, solemn return home after completing a course

of study with a preceptor, 12 *Vivaha* marriage which completes the purification and regeneration of the twice born

Of the above rites—1, 2, 3, and 10, are little observed. The other eight are more worthy of attention, 8 and 9 are of considerable legal importance even in the present day, and 7 is still practised, 7 and 12 are said to be the only rites allowed to Śūdras, and the 12th, *Vivaha*, 'marriage,' is a religious duty incumbent on all persons alike

Other Sanskaras practised in some parts of India are mentioned such as *Karna vetiṣa*, 'boring the ears', and occasionally the imparting of the Savitrī or sacred Vedic text commonly called Gayatrī, which ought to be performed at *Upanayana* is reserved for a separate ceremony four days later

One of the most important of the above Sanskaras is certainly *Upanayana*, induction into the order of a twice born man by investiture with the sacred cord'. This rite is enjoined for a Brahman in his eighth year, for a Kshatriya in his eleventh, and for a Vaiśya in his twelfth, though the time may be extended in each case

The sacred cord, which is generally a thin coil of three threads, commonly called *Yagnopavita*, is worn over the left shoulder, and allowed to hang down diagonally across the body to the right hip. The wearing of it by the three twice born classes is the mark of their second spiritual birth. There was some difference in the kind of thread worn, according to the class of the wearer, thus

The sacred cord of a Brāhman must be of cotton so as to be put on over his head in a coil of three threads, that of a Kshatriya, of hemp, that of a Vaiśya, of wool.

The ceremony of induction begins by the youth's

standing opposite the sun, and walking thrice round the fire. The Guru then consecrates the Yajnopavita by repeating the Gāyatrī ten times. Then, girt with the thread, the youth asks alms from the assembled company, to indicate that he undertakes to provide himself and his preceptor with food. The Guru then initiates him into the daily use of the sacred Sāvitrī prayer (called Gāyatrī, because it is in the three-measured Gāvatrī metre). preceded by three

The young Brahman is then a *Brahmacari*, or unmarried bachelor, and is supposed to reside with his preceptor till he has acquired a knowledge of the Veda. He is every day to bathe, to offer oblations of water to the gods, holy sages, and departed ancestors, and to feed the sacred fire with fuel. But he is forbidden to perform the regular *Śraddha* offerings to deceased persons till his studentship is completed. He is to abstain from meat, perfumes, unguents, sensuality, wrath, covetousness, dancing, music, gambling, detraction of others, falsehood, impurity of all kinds, and is never to injure any being. At the end of his studentship the young Brahman is to perform the proper *Sanskara* ceremony called *Samavartana* with the prescribed ablutions (*snana*) on the occasion of his solemn return to his own home,¹ soon after which he is obliged to take a wife and to become a householder (*Gṛhastha*). As to marriage, the following directions are given by Manu —

Eight forms of marriage are enumerated viz., *Brahma*, *Datta*, *Ārika*, *Prajapatya*, *Āsura*, *Gāndharva*, *Rākshasa*, and *Paisaca*. Of these, the first four are the most approved for a Brahman but the first is, practically the only one now in use. The *Gāndharva* marriage ('from affection without any nuptial rite'), and *Rākshasa* ('marrying a girl carried off as a prize in war') were allowable for *Kshatriyas*, the *Āsura* and *Paisaca* were prohibited.

In modern times marriage ceremonies last for several days,

In the present day the residence of the young Brahman with a preceptor is not enforced, so that the ceremonies of *Upanayana* and *Samavartana* are made to succeed each other within a day or two, or may even take place on the same day.

and are accompanied with great festivities. They cannot be commenced till the *Jyotshi*, or family astrologer, has fixed the auspicious day and hour. The bride is given away by her father or his representative at her own home. Perhaps the most important parts of the ceremony are the *Saptapadi*¹ or the leading of the bride three times round the sacred fire—each time in seven steps—the offering of the burnt oblation (*homa*) by the bridegroom, the binding together of the bride and bridegroom by a cord passed round their necks, and the tying together of their dresses. The rite is of course commenced by the worship of the god Ganesa, who wards off the obstacles by which all undertakings are liable to be thwarted through the malice of evil demons.

After marriage, which, as we have already seen, is one of the twelve *Sanskāras*, and a religious duty incumbent on all, the married Brahman is to perform every day all the domestic duties of a householder, and especially the five *Maha yajnas*, or great acts of worship,² viz. —

1. *Brahma yajna*, 'worship of Brahman,' performed by repetition of the Veda, 2. *Pitri yajna* 'worship of departed ancestors' by daily offerings of water and by periodical *Srāddha* ceremonies, 3. *Devā yajna*, 'worship of the gods' by morning and evening oblations in fire, &c., 4. *Bhūta yajna* 'worship of all beings,' including good and evil spirits, animals, &c., by scattering rice grains, &c., on the ground outside the door for animals to devour, 5. *Manushya yajna*, 'worship of men, performed by hospitality to guests.

Some of these must be performed at the three *Sandhyas*, or private religious services at sunrise, mid day, and sunset.

¹ See 'Indian Wisdom,' p. 199

² This offering is called *bali*, and is made with a particular mantra, part of which is as follows. 'Om to the Viśvadevas, to the universal gods, to men, beasts, birds, reptiles, the

amounting in theory to a complete abnegation of what in these days would be called 'women's rights'

A Brahman who has been in succession a *Brahmācārī* and *Gṛhastha* ought properly to pass through two other stages of existence as a *Vānaprastha* or hermit, and as a *Bhikṣu* or *Sannyāsī*, i.e. a religious devotee who has given up all worldly connections. But these are not now obligatory.

As to death, the filial piety of the Hindus is notably manifested in the importance attached to funeral rites and to *Śrāddhas*. These must be distinguished from each other. Funeral rites (*antyeṣṭi*) are *amanāgala*, 'inauspicious,' while *Śrāddhas* are *mānāgala*, 'auspicious.' To understand this it should be borne in mind that when a man dies, his *sthūla śarīra*, or 'gross body,' is burned¹ (this being in fact the *antya یشti*, last sacrifice offered in fire), but his soul cannot quit the gross body without a vehicle of some kind. This vehicle is the *linga-śarīra* or 'subtile body,' sometimes described as *angushtha matra*, 'of the size of a thumb,' invested in which the deceased man remains hovering near the burning ground. He is then in the condition of a simple individual soul invested with a subtile body, and is called a *preta*, i.e. a departed spirit or ghost. He has no real body capable of enjoying or suffering anything, and is consequently in a restless, uncomfortable plight. Moreover, while in this condition he is held to be an

¹ Infants under two years old, however, must be buried, not burnt.—See 'Indian Wisdom,' p. 302. Great ascetics (*Sannyāsīs*) and holy men (*Sādhus*) are also generally buried, and their tombs called *Samādhis*.

impure being, and all the relations who celebrate his funeral rites are held to be impure also until the first Śrāddha is performed. Furthermore, if he dies away from his kindred, who alone can perform the funeral ceremonies, and who are perhaps unaware of his death, and unable therefore to perform them, he becomes a *pisaca*, or soul wandering ghost, disposed to take revenge for its misery upon all living creatures by a variety of malignant acts.

The object, then, of the *antyeshti*, or funeral rites, which are celebrated for ten days after death, is not only to soothe or give *santi* by libations of consecrated water to the troubled spirit, but to furnish the *preta* with an intermediate body, between the *linga* or 'subtile' and the *sthula* or 'gross body'—with a body, that is to say, which is capable of enjoying or suffering and which is composed of gross particles, though not of the same kind as the earthly gross body.

In this manner only can the *preta* obtain *gati*, or 'progress' onward, either through the temporary heaven, or else through the temporary hells (which as we have seen are not places of eternal punishment but merely purgatories) to other births and ultimate emancipation. The following is a brief account of the more modern funereal ceremonies and subsequent Śrāddhas.

On the first day after death a *pinḍa* or round ball (generally of some kind of flour or of rice and milk), is offered with libations of water &c., on which the *preta* is supposed to feed, and which endows it with the rudiment or basis of the requisite body, whatever that basis may be. Next day another *pinḍa* is offered with water, &c., which gives it, perhaps limbs, such as arms and legs. Then it receives hands, feet &c. This goes

on for ten days, and the offering of the *pinda* on the tenth day gives the head. No sooner does the *pitra* obtain a complete body than it becomes a *pitri*, when, instead of being regarded as impure, it is held to be a *deva*, or 'deity,' and practically worshipped as such in the *śrāddha* ceremonies, the first of which takes place on the 11th day after death. Hence, a *śrāddha* is not a funeral ceremony, but a *pitri-yama*, or worship of departed ancestors, which worship, however, is something different from *pūjā* to a god. It is performed by making offerings of round balls of rice, flour, &c., with accompaniments of sacred grass, flowers, and sprinklings of water, and with repetitions of mantras and texts from the *Sāma-veda*, the whole ceremonial being conducted, not in a temple, but at any sacred spot, such as the margin of a river, or even in private houses. The ceremony is continued at stated periods with a view to accelerate the *gati* or 'progress' of the *pitris* onwards to heaven, and then through the various stages of bliss before described (see p. 51). The efficacy of *Śrāddhas*, performed at Gayā (see pp. 176, 177), is this, that wherever in this progress onwards departed relatives may have arrived, the *Śrāddhas* take them at once to *Vaikuṇṭha*, or *Vishnu's* heaven.

The departed relatives especially entitled to benefit by the *Śrāddha* rites are as follows —

1. Father, grandfather, great grandfather; 2. Mother, mother's father and grandfather; 3. Stepmother, if any; 4. Father's mother, grandmother, and great grandmother, 5. Father's brothers; 6. Mother's brothers; 7. Father's sisters, 8. Mother's sisters, 9. Sisters and brothers; 10. Fathers in law. An eleventh person is sometimes added, viz. the family spiritual teacher (*guru*).

Śrāddhas are of various kinds, and performed at various times, such as *Nitya*, regular, *Pūrṇima*, at particular changes of the moon, *Ekadashī*, on special occasions and with reference to particular persons. These ceremonies with those at birth (see p. 59) and death, at investiture with the sacred thread (*upanayana*) and marriage (*vivāha*) already described, constitute

in the present day the most important religious rites among the Hindus.

Some Śrāddhas—especially those first performed after the termination of the funeral rites—are accompanied with much feasting and costly gifts to the Brahmans invited to assist at their celebration, and some are actually commuted for this feeding and feasting of Brāhmans¹

The performance of the first Śrāddha is more particularly marked by largesses of all kinds, and sometimes, it is said, costs a rich man a sum equivalent to several thousand pounds. It should take place on the eleventh day, or the day after mourning expires, and then at least once a month for twelve successive months, this monthly (*masika*) ceremony being called by Manu *Amāharya*. Afterwards it must be performed annually (*Sāmtatsarika*) on all anniversaries of a father's death. The following should be noted —

The offering of the *Pinda*, or ball of rice, &c., to deceased fathers at a Śrāddha is of great importance in regard to the Hindu law of inheritance. It furnishes the principal evidence of kinship on which the title to participate in the patrimony is founded, no power of making wills being recognized in Manu, or any other authoritative code of Hindu jurisprudence. The

¹ Many Śrāddhas certainly appear to have more reference to the living than to the dead, and others seem to be performed by a process of feeding and feeding Brahmans (*Brahmana santarpana*) who are supposed to represent the Pitris. Some of these are called *Hasta śrāddha*, *Hiranya śrāddha*, *Amanna śrāddha*, *Dadhi śrāddha*, *Nāna-śrāddha*. The last is a homage paid to ancestors before performing such joyous ceremonies as marriage, investiture with the sacred thread (*upanaśana*), and birth ceremonies.

Virtue alone stays by him at the tomb,
And bears him through the dreary trackless gloom
(iv 240, 242)

Depend not on another, rather lean
Upon thyself, trust to thine own exertions.
Subjection to another's will gives pain,
True happiness consists in self reliance (iv 160)

Strive to complete the task thou hast commenced,
Wearied, renew thy efforts once again,
Again fatigued, once more the work begin,
So shalt thou earn success and fortune win (ix, 300)

There are at least nineteen other well known codes¹ besides that of Manu. Of these the best known is that of *Yamaalkya*, which, with its most celebrated commentary the *Mituksharā* by *Vynānthara*, is now the principal authority of the School of Benares and Middle India. It seems originally to have emanated from a school of the White *Yajur* *veda* in Mithilā or North Behar, just as we have seen that the code of the *Manava* is did from a school of the Black *Yajur* *veda*. Book 1: 2 makes the author say —

The chief of devout sages (*Yajnavalkya*), dwelling in Mithilā, having reflected for a moment, said to the *Munis*, 'Listen to the laws which prevail in the country where the black antelope is found' (cf *Manu*, ii 23)

The following may be noted concerning *Yajnavalkya*'s work —

It is much more concise than that of *Manu*, being all comprised in three books instead of twelve, which circumstance leads to the inference that it has suffered even more curtailment at the hands of successive revisers of the original text than the *Code of the Manava*. Like that code it seems to have been preceded by a *Viddha* and a *Vybhāt* version, and like that code,

¹ See *Ind. in W. Ind.* p. 211, 201.

the whole work as we now possess it, is written in the ordinary Sloka metre. The first book is chiefly on social and caste duties (*acara*), the second is mainly on administrative judicature and civil and criminal law (*vyavahāra*), the third is principally on devotion, purification, expiation penance (*prayaschitta*) &c. The Mitakshara commentary follows the same arrangement, and is divided also into three parts.

Although Yājñavalkya's code must have represented the customs and practices prevalent in a district (Mithilā) situated in a more easterly part of India, yet nearly every precept in the first book, and a great many in the second and third, have their parallels in similar precepts occurring throughout the code of the Mānavas.

Nevertheless, it represents a later stage of Hindū development. Its arrangement is much more systematic. It presents fewer repetitions and inconsistencies, and less confusion of religion, morality, and philosophy, with civil and criminal law. As to the date of Yājñavalkya's law-book, it has been conjecturally placed in the middle of the first century of our era. The period of its first compilation cannot of course, be fixed with certainty, but internal evidence clearly indicates that the present redaction is much more recent than that of Manu's law book.

Two verses from Yājñavalkya's code literally translated are here subjoined as specimens —

The success of every act on depends on destiny and on a man's own effort, but destiny is evidently nothing but (the result) of a man's act in a former state of existence (i. 348 cf. Manu, vi. 205)

Some expect the whole result from destiny or from the inherent nature (or force of a thing), some expect it from the lapse of time, and some from a man's own effort, other persons of wiser judgment expect it from a combination of all these (i. 349).

CHAPTER VI

THE BUDDHISTIC MOVEMENT, AND ITS INFLUENCE
ON BRĀHMANISM

A BRIEF account of the contact and conflict of Buddhism with Brahmanism, and of the introduction of Buddhistic ideas into the religious creed of the Brāhmins, is essential to an accurate delineation of Hinduism. And here we are able to feel that—chronologically at least—we are not groping our way through a region of mere conjecture. We seem at last to have planted our feet on a firmer standpoint. Our story assumes more of the character of history. The date usually fixed for Buddha's death is 543 B C. Whether this precise year for one of the greatest epochs in the religious history of the human race can be accepted is doubtful, but it is tolerably certain that Buddhism arose in Behar and Eastern Hindustan about five centuries B C, and that it spread with great rapidity, not by force of arms, or coercion of any kind, like Muhammadanism, but by the sheer persuasiveness of its doctrines.

The first tolerably trustworthy date in Indian history is the era of Candragupta (=Sandrokottus¹)

¹ The minister of Candragupta was the celebrated and crafty Brahman Cāṇakya, the author of many well known precepts of government and polity. In the political drama

the founder of the Maurya dynasty, who, after making himself master of Pātaliputra (Palibothra, Patna) and the kingdom of Magadha (Behar), extended his dominion over all Hindūstān, and presented a determined front towards Alexander's successor Seleukos Nikator, the date of the commencement of whose reign was about 312 B C. When the latter contemplated invading India from his kingdom of Bactria, so effectual was the resistance offered by Candra gupta that the Greek thought it politic to form an alliance with the Hindū king, and sent his own countryman Megasthenes as an ambassador to reside at his court.

To this circumstance we owe the first authentic account of Indian manners, customs, and religious usages by an intelligent observer who was not a native, and this narrative of Megasthenes, preserved by Strabo, furnishes a basis on which we may found a fair inference that Brahmanism and Buddhism existed side by side in India on amicable terms in the fourth century B C. There is even ground for believing that King Candra gupta himself was in secret a Buddhist, though in public he paid homage to the gods of the Brahmins, at any rate, there can be little doubt that his successor Aśoka did for Buddhism what Constantine did for Christianity—gave an impetus to its progress by adopting it as his own creed. Buddhism, then, became the state religion, the national faith of the whole kingdom of

called *Mudrā rākshasa*, 'Signet ring Rākshasa,' he is represented as having effected the death of King Nanda and secured the accession of Candra gupta to the throne.

Magadha, and therefore of a great portion of India

This Asoka is by some regarded as identical with Candragupta, at any rate, their characters and much of their history are similar. He is probably the same as King Priyadarśi, whose edicts on stone pillars enjoining *Dharma*, or the practice of virtue and universal benevolence, are scattered over India from Katik in the east and Gujarat in the west to Alahabad, Delhi, and Afghānistan on the north west.

What then is Buddhism? It is certainly not Brahmanism, yet it arose out of Brahmanism and from the first had much in common with it. Brahmanism and Buddhism are closely interwoven with each other, yet they are very different from each other. Brahmanism is a religion which may be described as all theology, for it makes God everything and everything God. Buddhism is no religion at all, and certainly no theology, but rather a system of duty, morality, and benevolence, without real deity, prayer, or priest.

The name Buddha is simply an epithet meaning 'the perfectly enlightened one,' or rather one who by perfect knowledge of the truth, is liberated from all existence, and who, before his own attainment of Nirvāṇa, or 'extinction of worldly existence,' reveals to the world the method of obtaining it.

greatest tenderness towards them was enjoined, even to their medical treatment, if sick or diseased.

Moreover, as actions, good or bad lead to repeated existences, the great end and object of every man was to attain non-existence (*nirvana*) by self mortification, austerity (*tapas*), and the suppression of all action.

Here, then, we have five marked features of Buddhism: 1. disregard of all caste distinctions, 2. abolition of animal sacrifice and of vicarious suffering, 3. great stress laid on the doctrine of transmigration, 4. great importance assigned to self mortification, austerity, and abstract meditation, as an aid to the suppression of all action, 5. concentration of all human desires on the cessation of transmigration.

There is still a sixth, which is the most noteworthy of all: that the Buddha recognized no spirit or soul as distinct from material organization, and no Supreme Spirit, the Hindu gods were merely orders of beings.

A Buddhist, therefore, never really prays: he only meditates on the perfections of the Buddha and the hope of attaining Nirvana, though practically he is subject to an all powerful god—a god to be got rid of as soon as possible—in *Karman* 'act.'

Nor can he have any theological creed. His only confession of faith is, 'I have recourse to' (or 'take refuge with') 'Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha'—to the Buddha, the Law or Doctrine, and the Community of Monks. These three are sometimes called the three gems, and constitute a sort of Buddhist trinity. With regard to Dharma, or Doctrine, we may remark that convocations or assemblies of monks seem to have formulated the teaching of early Buddhism.

It is said that three synods or conferences, were held after the Buddha's death, to settle the sacred canon of scripture, which was afterwards comprised in three collections called the *Tripiṭaka* or 'three baskets,' consisting of 1 *Sūtra*, the discourses of the Buddha, 2 *Dharma*, the duties of the masses of the people (sometimes called *Abhi-dharma*, though this term should be restricted to the philosophical doctrines taught as a supplement to Dharma), 3 *Vinaya*, rules of discipline for the monks.

To enter upon a detailed description of the Buddhist Dharma is not part of our plan. We must confine ourselves to the briefest possible summary of its doctrines and precepts.

Four great truths are supposed to have been revealed to Buddha as the first result of his long period of abstract meditation. These together constitute what is commonly called the 'Law or doctrine of the Wheel.' They are —

1 Suffering exists wherever there is life. 2 Suffering is caused by desire. 3 Release from suffering depends on the suppression of desire and extinction of being (*nir-jna*). 4 Nirvana can only be obtained by following the paths pointed out by the Buddha of the period, who has achieved supreme knowledge in each cycle of the universe and who reveals to the world the method of obtaining it. These paths are eight in number, four of them, viz. right vision, right thoughts, right words, and right actions, being applicable to all men, the other four being reserved for ascetics only.

These others are right living as a recluse, right application to the study of the law, right memory in recollecting the law, and right meditation.

Hence, it is clear, that the Buddha regarded men

as divided into two classes, the first, who are still attached to a worldly life, are called *Upāsakas* or 'laymen.' The second, who by self mortification are bent on being delivered from it, are called *Sramanas*, 'ascetics,' or 'monks,' and, if they wander from place to place, *Bhikshus* or *Paritṛīyakas*, 'religious mendicants.' They are only priests in the sense of being teachers. Of priests in the strict sense the Buddhist religion has none, for where there is no god, there can be no need of propitiation, or even of prayer, though a short form of words is repeated, or written down and turned in a wheel,¹ as a kind of charm against diseases and malignant demons, and as having, like other acts, a kind of mechanical efficacy. Both classes of men—laymen and ascetics—must equally practise *Dharma*, 'the law,' to avoid greater misery, either in future births, or in one of the 136 hells; for the passing through repeated births, even in the most degraded forms of life, is not sufficient punishment for the effacement of dement, without the endurance of terrific torments in numerous hells. There are ten negative prohibitions, and eighteen positive injunctions. Of the prohibitions five are for all, viz, Kill not. Steal not. Commit no adultery. Lie not. Drink no strong drink.

The other five are for ascetics or monks, viz, Eat no food, except at stated times. Abstain from dances, theatres, songs, and music. Use no ornaments or perfumes. Use no luxurious beds. Receive no gold nor silver.

¹ One form is *Om namo padme hūm*, 'Om! the jewel in the lotus! Amen!' Or else *Amṛtaya Om*, 'Om! to the immeasurable One.'

Of the eighteen positive injunctions there are six perfections of conduct (*Paramitas*)¹ incumbent on all, viz —

1 Chanty or benevolence (*dana*) 2 Virtue or moral goodness (*śīla*) 3 Patience and forbearance (*kṣānti*) 4 Fortitude (*vīrya*) 5 Meditation (*dhyana*) 6 Knowledge (*prajñā*) Of these that which especially characterizes Buddhism is the perfection of benevolence displayed towards all living beings

Even self-sacrifice for the good of animals and inferior creatures of all kinds is a duty

It is recorded of the Buddha himself that in former existences he frequently gave himself up as a substituted victim in the place of doves and other innocent creatures, to satisfy the appetites of hawks and beasts of prey, and on one occasion meeting with a famished tigress unable to feed her cubs, he was so overcome with compassion that he sacrificed his own body to supply the starving family with food

Besides these six positive injunctions for all, there are twelve others incumbent on ascetics, viz —

1 To dress only in coats of rags 2 To have a coat in three pieces sewn together with the owner's own hands 3 To cover the coat of rags with a yellow cloak 4 To eat only one meal daily 5 Never to eat after noon 6 To live only on food collected from door to door in a wooden bowl 7 To live for part of the year in woods and jungles 8 To have no other shelter but the leaves of trees 9 To have no other furniture but a carpet 10 To sit, and not to lie down on this carpet during sleep 11 To sit with no other support than the trunk of a tree 12 To frequent cemeteries and burning grounds every month for meditation on the vanity of life.

¹ Leading to the shore of Nirvāṇa

These rules of conduct include many secondary precepts, for instance, not only is untruthfulness prohibited, but all bad language, not only is patience enjoined, but the bearing of injuries, resignation under misfortune, humility, repentance, and confession of sin to one another. This last was required to be practised by all priests or ascetics twice a month, and, it is said, that King Asoka enjoined on his subjects a great quinquennial expiatory ceremony for the practice of confession and almsgiving¹

There remains the question—what has been the probable influence of the Buddhistic movement on Brahmanism? The answer is—Brahmanism has taken from Buddhism the abolition of sacrifices, great tenderness towards animal life, great intensity of belief in the doctrine of transmigration, and in the efficacy of *tapas* or self mortification as a source of power in accelerating progress towards final emancipation²

It has even received from Buddhism a tendency to recognize caste as an evil, or at least as an imperfection to be got rid of under certain circumstances and on certain occasions. It is an admitted fact that,

¹ One of these great ceremonies was witnessed by the Chinese pilgrim and traveller, Hiouen Tsaang at Nalandā. See Wheeler's 'History of India, vol. iii p 275 (See also the Rev J Robson's 'Hinduism and its Relations to Christianity')

² Hinduism has borrowed ideas from Buddhism in many minor points such as the veneration for the footprints of divine and holy personages. Notably, too it has fixed its Tirthas at many places held sacred by the Buddhists, such as Gaya

although caste in the end has always reasserted itself, various Vaishnava and Śaiva reformers¹ and founders of sects, have imitated Buddha in requiring their followers to drop caste distinctions, and it is well known that at the meetings of *Sāktas* or *Tāntrikas*, (see p. 122) and at certain sacred places of pilgrimage (such as Puri in Orissa, and Tripati), caste, so far at least as the eating of food is concerned, is for a time entirely laid aside.² In short, Brahmanism and Buddhism appear to have blended, or as it were, melted into each other, after each had reciprocally parted with something, and each had imparted something. At any rate it may be questioned whether Buddhism was ever forcibly expelled from any part of India by direct persecution, except, perhaps, in a few isolated centres of Brahmanical fanaticism, such as the neighbourhood of Benares. Even in Benares the Chinese traveller Hiouen Tsang, found Brāhmanism and Buddhism³ flourishing amicably side by side in the 7th century of our era.⁴ In the South of India the Buddha's doctrines seem to have met with acceptance at an early date, and Ceylon was probably converted as

¹ The Lingaists of the South of India have theoretically no caste among themselves. They say we all belong to a fifth caste. The same may be said of the Vaishnavas of Bengal, followers of Ācārya, of various orders of ascetics and other sects. See Chapter X.

² In some parts of India the very name for caste is *Bhram*, 'error,' and the temple of Jagannāth is a temple of Concord for all castes.

³ At Ellora the three series of Buddhistic, Brahmanical, and Jain caves all run into each other, as if they co-existed.

early as B C 240 soon after the third Buddhist council held under King Asoka. In other parts of India there was probably a period of Brahmanical hostility, and perhaps of occasional persecution, but eventually Buddhism was taken by the hand, and drawn back into the Brahmanical system by the Brahmans themselves who met it halfway, and ended by boldly adopting the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. This has always been the astute policy of the Brahmans of India. They have perceived the power of compromise, and overcome opposition by wise concessions and partial adaptations. It is thus that they have always enticed dissenters back to their caste-system. It was thus that they became Buddhists to the Buddhists that they might win the Buddhists. Only a small section of the Buddhist community resisted all conciliation, and these are probably represented by the present sect of Jains (see p 221 of the Appendix).

Be the actual state of the case as it may, nothing can be clearer than the fact that Buddhism has disappeared from India (the island of Ceylon being excepted), and that it has not done so without having largely contributed towards the moulding of Brahmanism into the *Hinduism* of the present day.

CHAPTER VII

DEVELOPMENT OF HINDŪISM AND THE DOCTRINE
OF TRIPLE MANIFESTATION (*Trī mūrti*)

THE period marked by the disappearance of Buddhism out of India is sometimes called the 'Revival of Brahmanism'. If this term be adopted, then Śankarācārya, one of the strictest and most learned of Brāhmins, and a noted philosopher who flourished in the South of India about the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth century,¹ ought to be called the great Revivalist preacher. Brahmanism, however, never revived in its purity, and long before the time of Śankara had degenerated. The term Brāhmanism is more properly restricted to the purely pantheistic and not necessarily idolatrous system evolved by the Brahmins out of the half monotheistic, half pantheistic religion of the Veda.

This system which was fully developed in the Vedānta philosophy, and is commonly called *Advaita* Non-dualism, insists as we have seen, on the unity of all being.

But it has also other characteristics. It may be described as in one sense the most self-annihilating

of Buddhism except its atheism, its denial of the eternity of soul, and its levelling of caste distinctions

Of course it will be held that in investigating the causes of the development of Hinduism, and its capacity for almost universal adaptation, we are bound in fairness to examine it from the standpoint of the Hindus themselves, we ought to go to the Hindus own authorities, we must appeal to the Veda, the Upanishads and the philosophical works founded on them

What then have we already learnt about the creeds inculcated by these books? We know that they teach pantheism pure and simple. But they do more, they propound a most subtle theory of evolution and development

Their doctrine is, that the one sole, self existing Supreme Self, the only really existing Essence, the one eternal Germ of all things, delights in infinite expansion, in infinite manifestations of itself in infinite creation, dissolution, and re creation, through infinite varieties and diversities of operation

This is so to speak, the preamble of Hinduism, and it is stated with great poetical power in a celebrated hymn of the Rig veda, part of which has been translated at page 26

The very name 'Brahman' (neut from root *ṛish*, 'to grow') given to the Eternal Essence, is expressive of this *growth*, this *expansion*, this *universal development* and *diffusion*

Hence, all visible form is an emanation from God and hence, to begin with the lowest visible objects,—stones, rivers, mountains, plants, trees, animals, and men—these are but steps in the infinite evolution of

his being. Hence, also a series of higher forms of existence, such as demigods, good and evil spirits, inferior gods, superior gods, is traceable upwards in an ascending scale from man, till three principal divine personages, each associated with a consort, to show that male and female, man and wife, are ever indissolubly united as the sources of reproduction—are reached. These three gods are the first and highest manifestations of the Eternal Essence, and are typified by the three letters composing the mystic syllable *OM* or *AUM*. They constitute the well known *Trimurti* or Triad of divine forms which characterizes Hinduism.

It is usual to describe these three gods as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, but this gives a very inadequate idea of their complex characters. Nor does the conception of their relationship to each other become clearer when it is ascertained that their functions are constantly interchangeable, and that each may take the place of the other, according to the sentiment expressed by the greatest of Indian poets, Kalidasa (*Kumara-sambhava*, Griffith vii 44) —

demands of two other constituent parts of man's complex nature,—for a religion of worldly activity on the one hand, and of austerity and self suppression on the other

The idea, therefore, of Brahmā the creator was soon expanded. He was regarded in other aspects both as a personification of all manifested matter,¹ and as the Lord and Father of all beings (*Prajapati*). In this latter character he is represented in the Vedas as having sacrificed himself for the good of his creatures (see p. 36), and it is remarkable that, although Brahma is now only worshipped in one principal place² in India (Pushkara, near Ajmir), yet many places are held sacred because supposed to be consecrated by sacrifices performed by him after the act of creation.

But this was not all. He was made to possess a double nature, or, in other words, two characters—one quiescent, the other active. The active was called his Śakti, and was personified as his wife, or the female half of his essence. The Śakti of the creator ought properly to represent the female creative capacity, but the idea of the blending of the male and female principles in creation seems to have been transferred to Śiva and his Śakti Parvatī. Brahmā with his four faces was then connected with the utterance of the four Vedas, and the worship which was his due was transferred to the Brāhmans, regarded as his peculiar offspring and, as it were, his mouth pieces,

To denote the gravity of matter, the Vahana, or vehicle on which the god Brahmā is supposed to ride, is a Hansa or goose.

¹ I was told, when travelling in India, that there is one other place (Idur) where homage is paid to Brahmā.

made his consort *Sarasvatī*, once a river-goddess, was regarded as the goddess of speech and learning, and inventress of the Sanskrit language and letters ¹

Again, the idea of a separate divine person—*ishnu*—whose functions were those of pervading, upholding, and preserving, was also soon expanded, and easily spread into numerous ramifications. It was from this idea that the doctrine of incarnation, to which we shall refer at greater length in the next chapter, was ultimately evolved. Moreover, a *Sakti*, or wife, called *Lakshmi*, goddess of good fortune, was assigned to this second person of the Triad.

Thirdly.—Inasmuch as destruction necessarily leads to re-creation and reproduction, the idea of the god *Budra* was also easily extended, so that a great variety of names, attributes, and functions, properly belonging to other deities, were gathered under this third person of the Triad ²

¹ The river *Sarasvatī* was to the earlier Hindūs what the Ganges was to the later: she was infused with divinity, and her influence permeated the writers of the Vedic hymns; she is sometimes identified with the Vedic goddess, *Vac*, speech, and invoked, as the patroness of science. *Sarasvatī pūjā* is performed on the *Śrī pañcamī*, the name of a festival kept on the fifth of the light half of Māgha, on which day books and writing implements are held sacred, and not used (see p. 182).

² He has certainly a few more names than *Vishnu*, one thousand and eight being specified in the 69th chapter of the *Śiva purāṇa*, and in the 17th chapter of the *Anusāsana parvata* of the *Mahā-bhārata*. The latter book, however, also gives a thousand names of *Vishnu*. Of course many of the names of *Śiva* are merely epithets descriptive of his attributes; e.g. *Virveśvara*, 'lord of the universe'; *Tri-lōcana*, 'three-eyed'; *Āṇā-kantha*, 'blue-throated,' his neck being blue, through the

memory of whose personal example as a self denying ascetic they sought thus to neutralize. In this character of the representative ascetic, as in that of the Reproducer, he is also sometimes called the 'Blessed one' (Śiva)

There are yet two other characters of the third person of the Triad, which seem to have been assigned to him by the Brāhmins to satisfy the religious instincts of the aboriginal tribes, and serve as substitutes for their wild demoniacal gods. In the first of these, which is a modification and adaptation derived from his first character of dissolver of the universe, he is the terrible destroyer (*Bhairava*) delighting in destruction for its own sake, though it should be noted that this malignant character is more connected with his wife Kālī, than with himself. In this character he is also called *Bhuteśvara*, 'lord of spirits or demons,' and is depicted as haunting cemeteries and burning grounds wearing serpents for garlands, and a string of skulls for a necklace,¹ sometimes surrounded with troops (*gana*) of imps and spirits (*bhuta*), and sometimes trampling on rebellious demons who have acquired too great power.

His fifth character is the entire reverse of ascetical. In this he is a sort of representative free liver, a wild jovial god, fond of dancing and drink, living in the

¹ Sometimes he has a tiger's skin, and he is often associated with a tiger, as his wife Durga is borne on that animal. Sometimes he has an elephant's skin on his shoulders, which once belonged to a demon said to have been killed by him. He is also associated with an antelope, and sometimes carries a kind of drum called *damaru*, and a staff with a skull at the top called *khatvāṅga*.

Himalaya mountains with his wife, often dancing with her the Tandava dance, and surrounded with dwarfish, buffoon like troops (*gana*) of attendants, who, like their master, are excited by drinking. This is the character in which he is worshipped by Tantrikas.

And here we may observe that in every one of his characters the consort of Śiva is not only his counterpart, but generally represents an intensification of his attributes.

As destructress she is *Kālī*, as reproducer she is symbolized by the *Yamī*, or she is the type of beauty in *Umā*, or she is the mother of the universe in *Jagan mātṛī*. She has also her forms as a female ascetic (*yoginī*), as a malignant being delighting in blood (*Blairati Durgā*), and as a mountaineer (*Pirattī*).

We have thus made good our assertion that the third member of the Tri murti, and his consort do, in fact, represent the gathering together, and unifying in one personality numerous attributes, properties, and functions belonging to various deities and various divine forces.

memory of whose personal example as a self-denying ascetic they sought thus to neutralize. In this character of the representative ascetic, as in that of the Reproducer, he is also sometimes called the 'Blessed one' (Śiva)

There are yet two other characters of the third person of the Triad, which seem to have been assigned to him by the Brahmans to satisfy the religious instincts of the aboriginal tribes, and serve as substitutes for their wild demoniacal gods. In the first of these, which is a modification and adaptation derived from his first character of dissolver of the universe, he is the terrible destroyer (*Bhairava*) delighting in destruction for its own sake, though it should be noted that this malignant character is more connected with his wife Kali, than with himself. In this character he is also called *Bhutesvara*, 'lord of spirits or demons,' and is depicted as haunting cemeteries and burning grounds wearing serpents for garlands, and a string of skulls for a necklace,¹ sometimes surrounded with troops (*gana*) of imps and spirits (*bhuta*), and sometimes trampling on rebellious demons who have acquired too great power.

His fifth character is the entire reverse of ascetical. In this he is a sort of representative free liver, a wild jovial god, fond of dancing and drink, living in the

¹ Sometimes he has a tiger's skin, and he is often associated with a tiger, as his wife Durga is borne on that animal. Sometimes he has an elephant's skin on his shoulders, which once belonged to a demon said to have been killed by him. He is also associated with an antelope and sometimes carries a kind of drum called *damru*, and a staff with a skull at the top called *khavāṅga*.

Himālaya mountains with his wife, often dancing with her the Tāndava dance, and surrounded with dwarfish, buffoon like troops (*gana*) of attendants, who, like their master, are excited by drinking. This is the character in which he is worshipped by Tantrikas.

And here we may observe that in every one of his characters the consort of Śiva is not only his counterpart, but generally represents an intensification of his attributes.

As destructress she is *Kālī*, as reproducer she is symbolized by the *Yoni*, or she is the type of beauty in *Umā*, or she is the mother of the universe in *Jagan matī*. She has also her forms as a female ascetic (*Yoginī*), as a malignant being delighting in blood (*Bhairavi Durgā*), and as a mountaineer (*Parvati*).

We have thus made good our assertion that the third member of the Tri murti, and his consort do, in fact, represent the gathering together, and unifying in one personality numerous attributes, properties, and functions belonging to various deities and various divine forces.

The destructive energies of the atmosphere exhibited in wind and storm, and personified in the Veda as Vayu, Rudra, and the Maruts, the all-consuming potency of time, the fertilizing properties present in dew and rain, the almighty agencies operating in creation once personified as Brahma, the same agencies operating in re creation and reproduction, the power of asceticism once exhibited in the Buddha, the grace of perfect beauty supposed to be specially present in Śrī or Lakshmi, the mysterious efficacy of magic and illusion (*māyā*), the terrific agencies and operations

of demons and spirits, and finally the all pervading influence of the impersonal soul of the universe—all these have been collected and centralized in one god, whose chief name is the 'Blessed one' (*Śiva*), whose person is supposed to be half male and half female, and whose triple eye and trident probably symbolize his combining the attributes of the Triad in himself¹

¹ These may denote his triple character of Destroyer, Re-producer, and Contemplative Ascetic, as the five faces with which he is sometimes represented may denote his fivefold character. Or may these five faces be connected with the five Samhitas of the Veda? Some think his three eyes refer to time, present, past, and future the crescent moon on his head also symbolizing his power over the measurement of time

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT OF ŚAIVISM, VAISHNAVISM AND THE DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION

A worshipper of the god Śiva, as described in the last chapter is called a Śaiva, and the preference given to the worship of this god may, for convenience, be called Śaivism. On the other hand, a worshipper of Viṣṇu is called a Vaiṣṇava, and the preference given to the adoration of any of the forms of Viṣṇu may conveniently be called Vaiṣṇavism.

It is scarcely too much to say that the creeds indicated by these two terms Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism (see pp 11, 12) constitute the very life and soul of modern Hinduism. Moreover, it should be clearly understood that Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are not opposite or incompatible creeds. They represent different lines of religious thought, like the differences which prevail in Europe, such lines being quite allowable within the limits of one and the same system. Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas do in fact acquiesce to a certain extent in each other's views, but each lays an exaggerated stress on particular doctrines (see pp 11, 12), and these differences eventually led to a temporary antagonism. Even in the present day, when universal toleration is the rule, Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas like to maintain their distinct characteristics, which they exhibit conspicuously to the eye by the sectarian mark.

on their foreheads, made with red, yellow, and white pigments, the mark of the Vaishnavas being two perpendicular strokes meeting below in a curve, which denote the footprint of Vishnu, while that of the Śaivas consists of three horizontal lines, made with white or grey ashes (*tribhuti*). The Vaishnava mark is called *Urdhva pundra*, the Śiva is called *Tri pundra*.

Although the worship of Śiva is prevalent everywhere throughout India, no temples being so common as those which enshrine his symbol (the *lingam*), and although all classes of the Hindus, and especially the Śaktas, or worshippers of the female principle (*Śakti*), pay him the highest respect as husband of the goddess, variously called Kālī, Durgā, Jagad dhātṛī, Matrī, &c., yet those who select the male god Śiva as their chosen divinity—that is to say, the divinity in whose *mantra* they are initiated, and to whom they look for special aid in the attainment of salvation—are comparatively insignificant in number¹. They are chiefly religious mendicants, Yogis, Gosvins, or Gosavins, Sannyāsas, or, as they are often improperly called, Fakirs.

In fact, the third member of the Tri murti, whether as Destroyer, or as Reproducer and Creator, or as chief of ascetics, is too impersonal and too severe a god for the multitude. He occupies too lofty a position above ordinary mortals. He is a stern divinity,

¹ Dr. Rajendralala Mitra, in his 'Antiquities of Orissa' (p. 137-138) says that it is the office of the Guru to initiate a disciple in the secret *Mantra* of the particular god he elects for his salvation, and that there is scarcely one in a hundred Gurus whose vocation is to impart the *Mantra* of Śiva.

to be approached with awe, and propitiated with reverence and fear, rather than with faith, trust, and love. This will be clear from the description in the preceding chapter. It is also shown by the sort of worship performed at his shrines.

In all the temples of Vishnu, Krishna, and Rama the chief daily ceremony, after washing and dressing the idol, and burning lights and incense before it, consists in offering it food of some kind,—boiled rice, grain cooked and uncooked, sweetmeats, fruit, &c., on the essence of which the deity is supposed to feed, as if he were in need of nourishment like a human being, while the remains (called *prasada* or *maha prasada*) are consumed by his worshippers. Moreover, the idols of these gods are constantly decorated with flowers and costly ornaments, especially on festive occasions. But in the case of Śiva, who, in one of his characters, is the chief of ascetics, no food is generally offered (except, perhaps at some centres of worship, such as those of Benares and Bhuvaneshvara). The daily ceremonials are of an austere, simple kind. Water from a sacred river is poured on his symbol, with perhaps a few oblations of flowers, but often there is nothing presented by worshippers but the *Vilva* leaf,¹ and it is remarkable that even in cases when food is offered to this divinity it is not allowed to be eaten by his votaries, according to the Brahmanical rule, “leaves, flowers, fruit, and

¹ The leaf of the *Vilva* or *Bāl* tree is typical of Śiva's attributes, because triple in form. This plant is also said to be pervaded by the presence of his wife Durga.

water become unfit to be consumed after being consecrated to Śiva' ¹

It is clear, therefore, that a more personal, and so to speak, human god than Śiva was needed for the mass of the people,—a god who could satisfy the yearnings of the human heart for a religion of faith (*bhakti*)—a god who could sympathize with and condescend to human wants and necessities. Such a god was found in the second member of the Trimurti. It was as Vishnu that the Supreme Being was supposed to exhibit his sympathy with human trials, and his love for the human race.

If Śiva is the great god (*Mahā deva*) of the Hindū Pantheon to whom adoration is due from all indiscriminately, Vishnu is certainly its most popular deity. He is the god selected by far the greater number of individuals as their saviour, protector, and friend, who rescues them from the power of evil, interests himself in their welfare, and finally admits them to his heaven (*Vaikuṇṭha*). But it is not so much Vishnu in his own person as Vishnu in his *incarnations*, that effects all this for his votaries.

Hinduism is like a drama in which the plot is clearly traceable, but in which the acts are numerous, and in which each succeeding act is more diversified and sensational than that which precedes. In the act which has now opened upon us, the scenes are continually shifting. We have, in fact, arrived at that phase of Hindūism when the doctrine of Tri mūrti is almost lost sight of in the prominence given to the

¹ *Agāḥyam Śrī narayānam pat ram puṣṭam phalam jalam*

various incarnations of the second member of the Triad.

It is probable that the primary idea of a god Vishnu (from root *vis* or *vis*, to 'pervade'), permeating and infusing his essence into material objects, might have been connected with the personification of the infinite heavenly space, just as the idea of the god Brahma was with that of actual manifested matter.

In the Rig veda, as we have seen, Vishnu is probably a form of the sun or penetrating solar ray, and in a well known hymn (1 22, 16), still commonly used by the Brahmans,¹ he is described as striding through the seven regions of the universe² in three steps, and enveloping all things with the dust (of his beams).

When the doctrine of the Tri mūrti became fully established and Vishnu had taken his place as the second member of the Triad (see p 91), he was often, like Śiva, identified by his worshippers with the self-existent all pervading Spirit, and under this aspect seems to have been associated with the watery element diffusing itself everywhere before the creation of the world.

In Manu (1 10) the Supreme Spirit is called Nārāyaṇa, as moving on the waters, in harmony with which idea Vishnu is often represented in sculptures,

¹ According to Dr Rajendralala Mitra, it is the holiest Mantra still recited at Śrāddhas and marriage rites.

² There are seven lower regions, viz., *Atala*, *Vitāla*, *Sutāla*, *Rasātala*, *Tātātala*, *Mahātala* and *Putāla*, above which are the seven Lokas or worlds, called *Bhūr* (the earth), *Bhuvār*, *Svar*, *Mahar*, *Janar*, *Tāpar*, and *Brahma*, or *Sāṅa*. Sometimes the first three of these, the earth (*Bhū*), atmosphere (*Bhuvār*), and heavens (*Svar*), are supposed to comprehend all the worlds.

images, and pictures as Nārāyaṇa in human form, reposing on the thousand headed serpent Śeṣha, and floating on the waters.¹

But whether Vishnu be connected with light, with heat, or with water, it is evident that the idea conveyed is that of a divine Pervader, infusing his essence for special functions into created things, animate and inanimate ; for example, into rivers, such as the Ganges, into trees and plants, such as the Tulsi, into animals, such as a fish, a tortoise, a boar, and lastly into men.

Probably the definite shape given by the Brāhmans to the doctrine of human incarnation, was due to their perception of the fact that the success of Buddhism was in great part due to the reverence the Buddha inspired by his own personal character. He practised honestly what he preached enthusiastically. He was sincere, energetic, earnest, self sacrificing, and devoted. Adherents gathered to thousands round the person of the consistent preacher, and the Buddha himself became the real centre of Buddhism. When he died, he ceased to exist. He became, according to his own doctrine, utterly annihilated, but the remains of his burnt body were enshrined as relics in various parts of India, and his memory was worshipped almost as earnestly as his person had been revered. The mere memory of a great man, however, cannot retain its hold on the affections of a people through many generations. The Brahmins saw this. They knew that the religious cravings of the great mass of the

¹ A lotus, on which is seated Brahmā, the Creator, is represented as issuing from the navel of the god, while the goddess Lakshmi, Vishnu's wife, chafes her husband's feet

Hindūs could not long be satisfied with the worship of relics, or with homage paid to a being held to be extinct. In all probability, soon after the death of Buddha (about the 4th century B C), they elaborated their scheme for supplying the people with real objects of faith and adoration out of their own epic poems, the *Ramāyana* and *Mahābharata*. The great Kshatriya dynasties were made to trace back their origin through Brāhmanical sages to the Sun-god and the Moon god,¹ while the great heroes, Rāma and Krishna, were declared to be not really Kshatriyas or even human beings, but incarnations of the god Vishnu.

And here be it noted that the idea of incarnation, like every other idea in religion, morality, and science, when manipulated by the Brahmans, was by them subtilized, distorted, and exaggerated. Hence the incarnations (*Avatāra*) of Vishnu which were undertaken reasonably enough for preserving the world when in pressing emergencies, especially when in danger of ruin from some undue acquisition of power on the part of evil demons, are said to be of five kinds and degrees.

1st, the full human incarnation, as that of *Kṛishṇa*, 2ndly, the partial human incarnation, consisting of half the god's essence, as in the *Rāma* of the *Rāmāyana*, commonly called *Rama-chandra*, 3rdly, the quarter incarnation, as in *Rāma's* brother *Bharata*,

As Vishnu is connected with Sūrya, the Sun, so Śiva is connected with Soma, the Moon, who is a male deity in Hindu mythology. One name for the god Śiva is moon-crowned (see pp. 92, 96)

It is remarkable that the first three incarnations are all connected with the tradition of a universal deluge.

✓ 4 *Narasimha*, 'the man lion.' In this, Vishnu assumed the shape of a creature, half man, half lion, to deliver the world from the tyranny of a demon called Hiranya kashipu, who had obtained a boon from Brahmā that he should not be slain by either god or man or animal. Hence he became so powerful that he usurped the dominion of the three worlds, and appropriated the sacrifices made to the gods. When his pious son Prahlada praised Vishnu, the demon tried to destroy the boy, but Vishnu appeared out of a pillar in the form Narasimha and tore Hiranya kashipu to pieces.

These four first incarnations are said to have taken place in the Satya or first age of the four ages of the world.

✓ 5 *Vamana*, 'the dwarf.' In the second or Tretā age, Vishnu descended as a dwarf to deprive the demon Bali (who resembles Ravana and Kansa in the stories of Rama and Krishna) of the dominion of the three worlds. Vishnu presented himself before him as a diminutive man, and solicited as much land as he could step in three paces. When his request was granted, he strode in two steps over heaven and earth, but out of compassion left the lower world, Patala (see p. 101, note 2) in the demon's possession.

✓ 6 *Parashu rama*, 'Rama with the axe.' In this, Vishnu was born, as the son of the Brahman Jamadagni and descendant of Dhritu, in the second age, to prevent the Kshatriyas from arrogating dominion over the Brahmamical caste. Parashu rama is said to have cleared the earth twenty one times of the whole Kshatriya class.

✓ 7 *Rama* (commonly called Rāma-chandra, 'the mild or moon like Rāma'), the hero of the Ramayana, son of King Dasaratha of the Solar race, and therefore a Kshatriya. Vishnu took this form at the close of the second or Tretā age, to destroy the demon Ravana (see p. 110).

✓ 8 *Krishna*, 'the dark god,' the most popular of all the later deities of India. This incarnation of Vishnu at the end of the Dvāpara or third age of the world, as the eighth son of Vasudeva and Devaki, of the Lunar race, was for the destruction of

the tyrant Kansa, the representative of the principle of evil, corresponding to Ravana in the previous incarnation

The details of the later life of Krishna have been interwoven with the later portions of the Maha Bharata, but they do not belong to the plot, and they might be omitted without impairing its unity. He is certainly not the hero of the great epic. He appears as a great chief who takes the part of the real heroes—the Pandavas—and his claims to deification are often disputed. His earlier days and juvenile feats, though not found in the oldest parts of the Maha Bharata, may be gathered from the Hari vansa and Puranas, especially the tenth book of the Bhagavata-purana, from which we learn as follows—

Vasu deva (a descendant of the Yadu who, with Puru, as sons of Yayati, formed the two branches of the Lunar dynasty) had two wives, Rohini and Devaki. The latter had eight sons, of whom the eighth was Krishna. It was predicted that one of these would kill Kansa, king of Mathura, and cousin of Devaki. He therefore imprisoned Vasu deva and his wife, and slew their first six children. The seventh, Bala rama, was abstracted from Devaki's womb, transferred to that of Rohini, and thus saved. The eighth was Krishna, born with black skin, and the mark called *Sri raktas* on his breast¹. His father, Vasu deva, escaped from Mathura with the child, and, favoured by the gods, found a certain herdsman named Nanda, whose wife, Yasodai, had just given birth to a daughter whom Vasudeva conveyed to Devaki, after substituting his own son in its place. Nanda took the infant Krishna and settled first in Gokula or Vraja, and afterwards in Vrindavana, where Krishna and Bala rama grew up together, roaming in the woods, and joining in the sports of the herdsman's sons. While still a boy, Krishna destroyed the serpent Kaliya, and lifted up the mountain Govardhana on his finger to shelter the Gopis from the wrath of Indra, who, enraged because Krishna had instigated them to the worship of Govardhana, tried to destroy them by a deluge. He is described as sporting constantly with these Gopis, the wives

¹ The date of his birth is kept as a great festival by the Hindus, and called *Janmashtami* (see the chapter on the festivals, p. 183)

and daughters of the cowherds, of whom eight were his favourites, especially Radha. Krishna built Dvaraka in Gujarat, and thither transported the inhabitants of Mathura after killing Kansa.

According to some, Krishna is not an incarnation of Vishnu, but Vishnu himself, in which case Bala rama, 'the strong Rama,' born at the end of the Drapara or third age of the world, as son of Vasu deva and Devaki, and elder brother of Krishna is sometimes substituted for Krishna, as the eighth incarnation of Vishnu.

9 *Buddha* The adoption of Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu was really owing to the desire of the Brahmans to effect a compromise with Buddhism (see p. 52). The reason some give for this incarnation is that Vishnu assumed the form of the great sceptical philosopher, in the fourth age of the world, that he might delude Daityas, demons, and wicked men, and lead them to bring destruction on themselves by despising the Veda, and neglecting caste duties and denying the existence of the gods. But the simple fact was that the Brahmans adopted Buddha as some of them are now adopting Christ, and making him out to be an incarnation of Vishnu.

10 *Kalki* or *Kalkin*, who is yet to appear at the close of the fourth or Kali age (when the world has become wholly depraved) for the final destruction of the wicked, for the re-establishment of righteousness upon the earth, the renovation of all creation, and the restoration of a new age of purity (*satya yuga*). According to some, he will be revealed in the sky, seated on a white horse, with a drawn sword blazing like a comet. From the fact of the horse playing an important rôle in this incarnation, it is sometimes called *Akshatara*. Some of the degraded classes of India comfort themselves in their present abject condition by looking to Kalki as their future deliverer and the restorer of their social position.

Before concluding the subject of incarnation, we may observe that Vishnu is the only member of the Tri murti who can be said to have infused his essence into actual flesh and blood for the salvation of the

world in times of peril and calamity. Sometimes there are allusions in the epic poems and Puranas to Avatars of Brahma and Śiva, but these are generally not so much incarnations undergone for the love of human beings, as various forms or manifestations of one or the other of these deities, especially of Śiva.

For example, there is a form of Śiva (sometimes described as his incarnation, sometimes as his son) called Virabhadra. He is said to have been created from Śiva's mouth, to take vengeance on the sage Dakṣa, who had omitted to invite Śiva and his wife to a great sacrifice, at which all the other gods were present. He is depicted as fierce and terrific, with a thousand heads, eyes, feet, and clubs. There are also eight Bhairavas, all terrific forms of Śiva, and sometimes called his incarnations. Again, there are eleven Rudras, regarded as manifestations of his destroying nature, and certain beings called Vātukas, which are his youthful or child manifestations. Finally, in his female counterpart Durgā, he is supposed to have assumed an innumerable variety of different forms for the destruction of demons, and the support of the world. These, however, more properly belong to another phase of Hinduism described in the next chapter.

Since the two great epic poems, the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata, were the sources whence the doctrine of incarnation was first evolved by the Brahmans, and since the latter is especially important as furnishing the greater part of the matter of the subsequent Puranas, it will be well to conclude this chapter with a brief summary of their contents.

The approximate pre Brahmanical and pre Buddhist versions of the two poems may be fixed at about 500 B C, and their first orderly completion in their Brāhmanized form may possibly have taken place in the case of the Rāmāyana, about the end of the 4th or beginning of the 3rd century B C., and in the case of the Mahābhārata still later.

The Rāmāyana (that is *Rāma-ayana*, the goings of Rāma, the 7th incarnation of Vishṇu for the destruction of the demon Rāvana), held most sacred, and equally revered by Vaishnavas and Śaivas, is believed to be a poem (*līṛga*), by a human yet inspired author, Vālmīki. It consists of about twenty-four thousand stanzas, arranged in seven books, which narrate the story of Rāma-āndra, whose name is a household word throughout all India, as follow :—

The first of these (called *Bāla kāṇḍa*) describes the boyhood of Rāma. Daśaratha, king of Ayodhyā, of the Solar dynasty, had no son, a serious calamity in India. A horse sacrifice, therefore, was performed to propitiate the gods. Four sons were then born from the three wives of Daśaratha; the eldest, Rāma, possessing half the nature of Viṣṇu, from Kausalyā, the second, Bharata, possessing a fourth part, from Kaikeyī; and the other two, Lakṣmana and Śatrughna, sharing the remaining quarter between them, from Sumitrā. While yet a stripling, Rāma was taken to the court of Janaka, king of Mithila or Videha. He had a wonderful bow, and had given out, that the man who could bend it should win his beautiful daughter Sītā. Rāma bent the bow, and Sītā thus became his wife; and she remained his one wife—the type of wife like devotion. The second (called *Ayodhyā kāṇḍa*) describes the transactions in Ayodhyā and the banishment of Rāma by his father, king Daśaratha, through the jealousy of Kaikeyī, who wished her own son to become the heir apparent. The third (called *Araṇya kāṇḍa*) narrates the events in the forest abode of

Rama after his banishment, including the carrying off of Sita by the demon Ravana, king of Ceylon. The fourth (called *Kishkindhya kanda*) details the occurrences at Kishkindhya the capital city of Sugriva, the monkey king who was Rama's ally in his expedition against Ceylon for the recovery of Sita. The fifth (called *Sundara kanda*, 'the beautiful section') gives an account of the miracles by which the passage of the straits and the arrival of the invading armies in Lanka (Ceylon) were effected. The sixth (called *Yuddha kanda*) describes the actual war with Ravana in Lanka, the victory over his armies and his destruction by Rama, the recovery of Sita, the return to Ayodhya, the reunion of the four brothers and final coronation of Rama. The seventh (called *Uttara kanda*) recounts the concluding events of the history of Rama after his coronation on returning to Ayodhya—his sensitiveness to the gossip and scandal of the citizens, his consequent banishment of Sita to the hermitage of Valmiki, notwithstanding the absolute certainty of her blameless conduct during her captivity in Ravana's palace, the birth of his twin sons, Kusa and Lava, in the hermitage, his final reunion with her and translation to heaven. All this supplement to the story has been dramatized by Bhava bhūti in his *Uttara rama carita*, and the whole previous history in his *Mahāvira carita*.

Let us now pass to the *Mahābharata*, probably by far the longest epic poem that the world has ever produced. It is called an *Itihāsa* or 'sacred history,' but is really a collection of *Itihāsas*—a vast cyclopædia or thesaurus of Hindū traditions, legendary history, ethics, and philosophy, which afterwards became the source of many of the *Puranas*. It seems to have passed through several stages of construction and reconstruction, until finally arranged and reduced to orderly written shape by a Brahman or Brahmins, whose names have been purposely concealed, because the work is held to be too sacred to have been com-

posed by any human author, and is therefore attributed to the divine sage Vyāsa

The entire work consists of about 220,000 lines, in eighteen Parvas or sections, as follow

The 1st, called *Adi parva*, describes how the two brothers, Dhritarāshtra and Pāṇḍu, of the Lunar dynasty, are brought up by their uncle Bhīṣma, who conducted the government of the kingdom of Hastinapura near Delhi, and how Dhritarāshtra, who is blind, has one hundred bad sons—commonly called the Kuru princes—by his wife Gāndhārī, and how the two wives of Pāṇḍu—Prithī (or Kuntī) and Mādri—have five good sons, called the Pāṇḍavas or Pāṇḍu princes. The eldest, Yudhiṣṭhira, is the Hindu ideal of excellence—a pattern of justice and integrity. Bhīma, the second, is a type of brute courage and strength. Arjuna, the third, rises more to the European standard of perfection. He may be regarded as the real hero of the *Mahābhārata*, of undaunted bravery, yet generous and tender hearted. Nakula and Sahadeva, the fourth and fifth, who are twins, are both amiable, noble minded, and spirited. The eldest of Dhritarāshtra's sons, called Duryodhana, is the type of every thing evil.

II *Sabha parva*, describes the great *Sabha* or 'assembly of princes' at Hastinapura, when Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the five Pāṇḍavas is persuaded to play at dice with Sakuni, and loses his title to the kingdom. The five Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī, their wife, are required to live for twelve years in the woods.

III *Vana parva*, narrates the life of the Pāṇḍavas in the Kāmyāka forest. This is one of the longest books, and full of episodes, such as the story of Nala and that of the *Kurātaraṃya*.

IV *Virāṭa parva*, describes the thirteenth year of exile, and the adventures of the Pāṇḍavas who lived for that year disguised in the service of King Virāṭa.

V. *Udyoga parva*, recounts the preparations for war on the side of both Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, the former being determined to recover their kingdom. Krishna and Bala rāma, who were relations of the contending parties, resolve not to fight, but Krishna consented to act as Arjuna's charioteer.

VI *Bhishma parvan*, describes how both armies join battle on Kuru kshetra, a plain north west of Delhi. The Kauravas are commanded by Bhishma, who falls transfixed with arrows by Arjuna, but lingers for some time

VII *Drona parvan*, describes how the Kuru forces are commanded by Drona, and how numerous battles take place Drona falls in a fight with Dhrishtadyumna (son of Drupada)

VIII *Karna parvan*, tells how the Kurus are led by Karna how other battles occur, in which Arjuna kills Karna

IX. *Salya parvan*, relates how Salya is made general of the Kuru army, and how numerous concluding battles take place, and only three of the Kuru warriors, with Duryodhana, are left alive. Bhima and Duryodhana then fight with clubs, and Duryodhana—the chief and eldest of the Kurus—is struck down

X. *Saṃśkṛta parvan*, describes how the three surviving Kurus make a night attack on the camp of the Pandavas, and kill all their army, but not the five Pandavas

XI *Stri parvan*, describes the lamentations of Queen Gandhari and the other wives and women over the bodies of the slain heroes

XII *Santi parvan*, recounts the coronation of Yudhishtira in Hastina pura. To calm his spirit, troubled with the slaughter of his kindred, Bhishma, still alive, instructs him at great length in the duties of kings, and gives rules for adversity and rules for attaining final emancipation

XIII *Anushasana parvan*, continues Bhishma's discourse Precepts and wise advice on all subjects are given, such as the duties of kings, liberality, fasting, eating, &c, mixed up with tales, moral and religious discourses and metaphysical disquisitions At the conclusion of his long sermon Bhishma dies

XIV *Akṣayinī parvan*, tells how Yudhishtira, having assumed the government performed an Asva medha or 'horse-sacrifice' in token of his supremacy

XV *Aśramarṇika parvan*, narrates how the old blind king, Dhriti rāshtra, with his queen Gandhari, and with Kunti, mother of the Pāndavas, retires to a hermitage in the woods After two years a forest conflagration takes place, and they immolate themselves in the fire to secure heaven and felicity

XVI *Mimāṃsā parvan* narrates the death of Krishna and Balarama their return to heaven the submergence of Krishna's city, Dvaraka by the sea, and the self slaughter in a fight with clubs (*musalā*) of Krishna's family the Yadavas, through the curse of some Brahmanas.

XVII *Mahāprasthān Parvan* describes the renunciation of their kingdom by Yudhishtira and his four brothers, and their departure towards Indra's heaven in Mount Meru.

XVIII *Sargarohana parvan*, narrates the ascent and admission to heaven of the five Pandavas, their wife Draupadi, and kindred.

The supplement, or *Harivansha parvan*, a later addition recounts the genealogy and birth of Krishna and the details of his early life.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH (*bhakti*) AS DEVELOPED IN
THE PURĀNAS AND TANTRAS

THE period of the Epic poems was not marked by much rivalry between the worshippers of the three members of the Trimurti. Brahma, Vishnu and Śiva were at first regarded as different names for the one universal eternal essence, manifesting itself variously. Their attributes and functions were constantly interchanged without any necessary antagonism. After a time the doctrine of incarnation received definite shape, and the heroes of the Epic poems were deified as incarnations of Vishnu. (It was not, however, till a comparatively recent period that strifes and jealousies arose between the followers of Vishnu and Śiva, and of their incarnations and manifestations, each god being identified with the Supreme Being by his worshippers.) The Puranas were then written for the express purpose, as we have seen, of exalting one deity or the other to the highest position while other books, called Tantras were composed to give prominence to the worship of the female counterpart of Śiva. Moreover, the doctrine of *bhakti*, or 'salvation by faith,' which existed to a certain extent from the earliest times, and which was fully pro-
pounded in the Bhagavad gita, a philosophical episode

Dominion over others, not to rule
 Will give no claim to lordship, self-willed women
 Will seek their pleasure, and ambitious men
 Fix all their hopes on riches gained by fraud
 The women will be fickle and desert
 Their beggared husbands, loving them alone
 Who give them money — Kings instead of guarding
 Will rob their subjects, and abstract the wealth
 Of merchants, under plea of raising taxes
 Then in the world's last age the rights of men
 Will be confused, no property be safe,
 No joy and no prosperity be lasting

There are eighteen *Upapurāṇas*, or 'secondary Purāṇas,' subordinate to the eighteen principal Purāṇas, of which the names only need be given, as follow —

1 *Sanatkumara*, 2 *Narasimha* or *Arjuna*, 3 *Nāradya* or *Vrihan naradya*, 4 *Siva*, 5 *Durvasa*, 6 *Kapila*, 7 *Isanaka*, 8 *Aśvamedha*, 9 *Varuna*, 10 *Kalika*, 11 *Samba*, 12 *Nandi*, 13 *Saura*, 14 *Parāśara*, 15 *Ādiya*, 16 *Mahetara*, 17 *Bhagavata* (for *Bhargava* ?), 18 *Vātsīstha*. In another list the *Nanda*, *Siva dharma*, *Brahminda* and *Kāurma* are substituted for some of the above.

Let us now turn to the Tantras, and consider the system they inculcate, which for convenience may be called Tantrism, or, from the Śaktas who follow it, Śāktism.

Although some of the Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas, such as the Skanda, Brahma vaivarta, and Kalikā, do in real truth teach Tāntrika doctrines by promoting the worship of Prakṛti and Durga, yet it is also true that the Tantras represent a phase of Hinduism generally later than that represented by the Purāṇas.

Indeed, Tantrism, or Śāktism, is Hinduism arrived at its last and worst stage of medieval development.

As the most conspicuous god of the Purāṇas is Vishnu with his incarnations, so the most prominent deity of the Tantras is Śiva with his manifestations, more especially in the innumerable forms of his female counterpart.¹

We have already noted that the principal Hindu deities are supposed to possess a double nature, or two characters—one quiescent, the other active,—and that the active, called his *Śakti*, is personified as his wife, or as the female half of his essence, represented, as we shall see presently, on his left side. Be it now observed that, just as the male god Śiva gathered under his own personality the attributes and functions of all the principal gods, and became ‘the great god’ (*Maha deva*)—that is, the most lofty and severe god of the Hindu Pantheon,—so his female counterpart became ‘the one great goddess’ (*devī, maha-devī*), who required more propitiation than any other goddess, and to a certain extent represented all other female manifestations of the Trimūrti, and absorbed all their functions.² For this reason even the wives of Brahma and Vishnu were said to be her daughters. According to the Vayu purāṇa, not only

¹ It must not, however, be forgotten that there are a few Vaishṇava Tantras which substitute Rādhā, the favourite wife of Kṛṣṇa, for Durgā, wife of Śiva.

² Kulluka (Manu, ii. 1) says, *Śrutiḥ śāstraṃ vidyā yajñikī tantrikī ūg*, ‘revelation is twofold, Vedic and Tāntrik.’ Besides the name Āgama there are two other names,—*Yamala* and *Damara*—applied to certain classes of Tantras.

was Śiva himself of a twofold nature, male and female but his female nature also became twofold, one half *Asita*, or white, and the other half *Sita*, or black, each of these again becoming manifold. The white, or mild nature, became separated into the Śaktis, called *Uma*, *Gauri*, *Lakshmi*, *Sarasvatī*, &c., the black, or fierce nature, into those called *Durga*, *Kālī*, *Cāmunda*, &c. In short, all the other Śaktis seem to have been included by the Śaktis under the Śakti or energy of Śiva, which eventually developed into innumerable separate manifestations and personifications of all the forces of nature, physical, physiological, moral, and intellectual. These forces, or rather the deified personalities presiding over them, were grouped in classes, such as *Mahavidyās*, 'sources of great knowledge', *Mātrīs*, 'divine mothers', *Yoginīs*, 'goddesses having magical powers'. They are too numerous to be separately named, various classifications having been adopted for the sake of disposing the female manifestations of Śiva, like the male incarnations of Viṣṇu (see p. 103), under different degrees of participation in the divine essence, such as the full (*pūrṇa śakti*, *mūla prakṛti*), the partial (*aṅga rūpīṇī*), the still more partial (*lālā rūpīṇī*), and the partial of the partial (*kālāṅga-rūpīṇī*), the lowest including mortal women in various degrees, from Brahman women downwards, who are all worshipped as forms of the divine mother upon earth.¹ There are, however, certain principal female personifications

¹ In the case of the Vaiṣṇava Śāktas, Rādhā, favourite of Kṛṣṇa represents the full manifestation, and the Gopīs the partial.

which it will be well to specify, for just as the Vāishnavas worship ten chief male incarnations of the god Vishnu, so the Śaktas worship ten chief female manifestations of the god Śiva, or rather of his Śakti or energy. They are called Mahavidyas, as sources of the highest knowledge, or of the knowledge which confers preternatural power, and their names are as follows —

1 *Kālī* (sometimes called *Śyāma*) 2 *Tūru*, represented as a stouter figure than *Kālī* with legs in a different attitude 3 *Kamalatmika* 4 *Mātangi* 5 *Bhairavi* 6 *Chinnamastakā*, represented as a naked headless goddess standing upon a human couple and holding in one hand a blood stained scimitar and in the other her own severed head, which drinks the warm blood gushing from her headless trunk 7 *Shodasi* (sometimes called *Tripara*) 8 *Bhuvaneshvari* (sometimes called *Manjughosha*) 9 *Dhumrata* 10. *Vagā* or *Bagala* (sometimes called *Bagalamukhi*). The last four are milder incarnations.

Besides these, there are principal *Matris*, *Yoginis*, &c., as already mentioned¹.

In fact, this phase of Hindūism may be described as a kind of worship of *force*, branching out into endless modifications and correlations, though why these should be regarded as female deities rather than as male is not at first sight clear.

In all probability the Tāntrika doctrine owes its

¹ Some lists give seven, some eight, nine, sixteen, fifty two of *Matris*, some upwards of a hundred. The *Yoginis* are sometimes represented as created by *Durga*, sometimes as forms of that goddess ten millions in number. Again, according to some, there are only eight chief *Yoginis*, according to others sixty five.

development to the popularizing of the Sankhya theory of *Purusha* (masculine), the inactive, in different soul, and *Prakṛiti* (feminine), the active producing principle, each distinct from the other, yet each uniting in the act of creation. In harmony with this idea the images of the great god Śiva sometimes represent him (see p. 96) as *Ardha nari*, that is, a being consisting of two halves, the male half being on his right side, and the female on his left.

It may easily be imagined that a creed like this was likely to degenerate into impure doctrines, and that result was actually brought about, for those who applied the principle of devotion (*bhakti*) to the double nature of the deities, finally resolved themselves into two classes,—the first called *Dakṣiṇī carins*, 'right hand worshippers,' who make the *Puranas* their real Veda (*agama*). These are devoted (*bhakti*) to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, and their wives, but merely in their characters of gods and goddesses, not with any undue preference for the female divinity, and not with any implication of impure ideas, the second called *Vāmacarins*, 'left hand worshippers,' who are followers of the *Kaula* panishad, and make that Upanishad and the *Tantras* their own peculiar Veda (*agama*). These devote themselves to the worship of the female counterpart of the deities, to Durgā rather than Śiva, to Rādhā rather than Kṛṣṇa, and to Sītā rather than Rāma, but especially to Durgā, not as Śiva's wife, but as the goddess who presides over two quite distinct operations,—the intercourse of the sexes and the acquisition of magical powers.

And here be it noted, that just as Buddhism was the expression of a natural effort to break through the restraints of caste in one direction, so Śāktism or Tāntrism was an effort in another—the one ending in asceticism, the other in licentiousness.

The rites, or rather orgies of the left hand worshippers, presuppose the meeting of men and women of all castes in the most unrestrained manner on terms of perfect equality.¹ They are carried on in secret, and are said to require the use of some of the five Māhāras, namely,—1 *Madya*, wine, 2 *Manasa*, flesh, 3 *Matsya*, fish, 4 *Mudrā*, parched grain,² 5 *Maithuna*, sexual union.³ Each of the above is again subdivided into five. But the object of these worshippers is not merely to break through the restraint of caste and give themselves up to licentious practices. They also aim at acquiring magical and mystical powers by the use, or abuse, of Mantras, and what are called Vījis, Njāsas, and Yantras.

¹ The circle they form at their meetings is called *Ākṣa*, and the verse cited as the authority for the temporary suppression of caste at these meetings is as follows —*Prap'e ki Bhairava e cakre sarve varṇa ā'ya, "mā' Nī rite Bhairave Ākṣe sarve varṇa prithak prithak"* "On entering the circle of Bhairava, all castes are on an equality with the best of the twice born, on leaving it, they are again separated into castes."

² This grain is eaten like dry biscuit with the wine and spirituous liquor. The term *Mudra* is also used in Tāntrism to denote mystical intertwinings of the fingers so as to form symbolical figures.

³ The union of the actual man and woman in the religion of the Tāntrikay, or left hand worshippers, takes the place of the Junga enl'yon in that of the right hand worshippers.

With regard to the Mantras, it should be observed that a Mantra with the Tantrikas loses its character of a divinely inspired prayer addressed to a deity (see p. 18). It is generally, indeed, a text from the Veda, but rather from the Atharva-veda collection than from the three others, and instead of a prayer or invocation, becomes a spell or charm, the very sound of which, if properly uttered and repeated according to prescribed formulæ, has, in itself, a mystical power for good or evil.

As to the Vijas, these are mystical letters or syllables employed for brevity to denote the root (*mūla*), or essential part of a Mantra, the name of the deity to whom it may be addressed, or some part of the body over which that deity presides. For example —

Am is said to denote Śiva, *U* Vishnu, *Hriṃ* the sun, *Laṃ* the earth, *Naṃ* the mind, *Dhām* both the goddess Bhuvaneshvari and the tongue, *Naṃ* both the goddess Annapurna and the nose, *Paṃ* the ear, &c.

And here, be it observed, that the proper location or application of the several letters of the alphabet to the several parts of the body, as symbols of the Śaktis or Matrikas who preside over those parts is called *Vijaya*, and plays an important part in the Tantrik worship. Sound is held to be eternal and co-existent with the deity (according to the Mīmāṃsā aphorism, *Śabda yonitad Brahma*). Hence the letters of the alphabet being the ultimate instruments by which sounds are uttered and thoughts expressed, are considered to possess supernatural attributes, and to have in themselves a mystical and

mysterious efficacy They are supposed to represent the several Matrikas, or Śaktis (forces), which sustain the corporeal organs, and govern the vital functions Let a man only acquaint himself with the proper pronounciation and application both of the Mantras and of their Vijas, or radical letters, and he acquires the power of working prodigies to any extent he pleases ¹

As to the *Yantras* these are mystical diagrams—generally combinations of triangular figures, like the inverted triangles of the Freemasons—supposed to possess occult powers Each of the Śaktis has a Yantra assigned to her, which Yantras are sometimes placed in the centre of representations of lotuses, the *Vijra* of the goddess being also inscribed a certain number of times on each petal

From the foregoing statement it will justly be inferred that the Tantras are generally mere manuals of mysticism, magic, and superstition of the worst and most silly kind

Theoretically, however, they are very different, and, as a matter of fact, they are not all of this character There are about sixty four original Tantras, and a large number of other Tantrik works, generally written in the form of a dialogue between the god Śiva and his wife None of the actual Tantras have, as yet, been printed or translated in Europe Prac

¹ There are certain Brahmans called Mantra śāstris who make this their peculiar business Hence the saying that 'all the universe is subject to the gods, the gods are subject to the Mantras, and the Mantras to the Brahmans Therefore, the Brahmans are the gods of the universe'

tically, they constitute a fifth Veda (in place of the Puranas) for the Śāktis, or worshippers of the female divine energy (*Śakti*) of the male gods, on which account the name *Agama* is sometimes given to the original Tantras to distinguish them from *Nigama*, a name only applied to the Vedas and Puranas

Every Tantra ought, like a Purana, to treat of five subjects, namely,—1 The Creation, 2 The destruction of the world, 3 The worship of the gods, 4 The attainment of all objects, especially of eight superhuman powers (*siddhis*), 5 The four modes of union with the Supreme Spirit (see p 51) Very few conform even partially to this rule Most of them are mere hand books for the use of practisers of a kind of witchcraft, which to Europeans appears so ineffably absurd that the possibility of any persons believing in it seems in itself almost incredible Whole Tantras teach nothing but what may be called the science of employing unmeaning sounds for acquiring magical power over friends, and for destroying enemies and rivals

Some give collections of spells suitable for making people enamoured, for destroying sight, for producing or preventing diseases, for injuring crops, for alchemy (*rasayana*) Others explain the most effectual modes of worshipping the Śāktis, Mahavidyas, Matris, Yoginis, Vātukas or by whatever name the innumerable manifestations of Śiva and his wife may be called Others simply describe the Yantras, Vijas, and Mudrās (intertwinings of the fingers) belonging to each manifestation, the places suited for the worship of each, the names of trees and plants sacred to

each, or permeated by each, and the days of the year allotted to each. Some few touch on nearly every conceivable topic of human knowledge, and contain here and there really interesting matter.

So little is known about the composition of these mystical writings that it is not possible to decide at present as to which are the most ancient, and still less as to the date to be assigned to any of them. They are all said to be founded on the *Kṛulopaniṣad*. It may, however, be taken for granted that the extant treatises are, like the extant Purāṇs, founded on older works, and if the oldest known Purāṇa is not older than the sixth or seventh century, an earlier date can scarcely be attributed to the oldest known Tantra. Perhaps the *Rudra jāmalā* is one of the most deservedly esteemed and most encyclopedic in its teaching.¹ Others are the *Śakti sangama*, *Viśva sara*, *Maha nṛīana*, *Vīra*, *Kulārṇava* (or text book of the Kaulas), *Ś'jama rahasya*, *Saradā tilaka*, *Uḍḍisa*, *Kāmakhyā*, *Vishṇu jāmalā*.

Full as the above works are of doubtful symbolism, they are not necessarily full of impure allusions, though the teaching contained in the best of them unquestionably tends towards licentiousness. When they are better known, their connection with a distorted view of the Sankhyan philosophy, and with some of the corrupt forms of Buddhism, will probably be made clear.

There are also works called Vaishnava Tantras, such as the *Gautamīya* and the *Sanat kumāra*, but

¹ It is said to consist of 100 000 verses. A section of it, called *Jati māla*, treating of caste, has been printed at Calcutta.

even in these Śiva is the narrator and his wife the supposed listener. Moreover their teaching, which makes Radha, the wife of Krishna, take the place of Durgā as the chief object of adoration, has the same tendency as that of the other Tantras, and equally leads to licentiousness.

It may be well to give some idea of what this Tantrik teaching really is, by a specimen of the directions given for performing the rite called *Bhūta-suddhi*, a rite the aim of which is to expel the evil spirits whose presence would interfere with the due performance of subsequent ceremonies. The directions are here abridged from a native work on the *Durga puja* of Bengal.¹

Holding a scented flower, anointed with sandal, on the left temple, repeat *Om* to the Gurus, *Om* to Gaṇeśa, *Om* to Durgā. Then with *Omphat* rub the palms with flowers and clap the hands thrice over the head, and by snapping the fingers towards ten different directions, secure immunity from the evil spirits. Next utter the Mantra *Ṛam*, sprinkle water all around, and imagine this water as a wall of fire. Let the priest identify himself with the animal spirit (*jīva-man*) abiding in man's breast, in the form of the tapering flame of a lamp, and conduct it by means of the Sushumna nerve through the six spheres within the body upwards to the Divine Spirit. Then meditate on the twenty-four essences in nature, viz. the five cardinal elements, the five external organs of sense, the five organs of action, with those of self-consciousness and self-cogitation or egoism.

Conceive in the left nostril the Mantra *Yam*, declared to be the Vijn or root of wind, repeat it sixteen times while drawing air by the same nostril, then close the nose and hold the breath, and repeat the Mantra sixty-four times.

¹ The author's name is *Pratīpa Candraya Ghosh*.

Then meditate on *Mātrikā*, and say, 'Help me, goddess of speech' • *Am* to the forehead, *Am* to the mouth, *Im* to the right eye, *Im* to the left eye, *Um* to the right ear, *Um* to the left ear, *Im* to the right cheek, *Im* to the left cheek, *Em* to the upper lip, *Am* to the lower lip, *Om* to the upper teeth, *Aum* to the lower teeth, *Tam*, *Tham*, *Dam*, *Dham*, and *Nam* to the several parts of the left leg *Pam* to the right side, *Pham* to the left, *Bam* to the back, *Mam* to the stomach, *Yam* to the heart, *Ram* to the right shoulders, *Lam* to the neck bone, *Vam* to the left shoulders, *Sam* from the heart to the right leg, *Ham* from the heart to the left leg, *Ksham* from the heart to the mouth

CHAPTER X

MEDIEVAL AND MODERN SECTS

IN the previous chapters we have endeavoured to trace briefly the progress of Hinduism, and have followed it to the last stage of its development in medieval times—to its darkest and worst phase, Śaktism or Tantrism. It is believed that six or seven hundred years ago Śaktism was universally prevalent throughout the greater part of India, as indeed it still is in Bengal and many other extensive districts. This general degradation of religion through what is called the left hand form of worship—or devotion to the female counterpart of Śiva—led to the springing up of various reforming sects, and to them we must now turn our attention. It is a subject which opens out an almost unbounded field on which to expatiate, and volumes might be written before exhausting it. Our limited space, however, restricts us to a brief notice of some of the chief sects, and at the very outset we are met by a difficulty as to what is meant by a Hindū sect?

The term is sometimes applied in a general way to five classes of worshippers, viz. the *Āiśvkaras*, *Sartas*, and *Śaktas*, with the *Sauras*, Sun worshippers, and *Ganapatys*, adorers of Ganapati (Ganeś), the lord of the troops of devil. But the greater number of

Hindūs are worshippers of Vishnu, Śiva or their Śaktis, and although many display special preference for one or the other, many also pay homage to all these deities equally, without belonging to particular sects.

Moreover, all good Hindus adore the sun (*Sūrya*) daily, and scarcely any religious rite is performed without homage being paid to him or Mantras being addressed to him, while only a few persons here and there are specially initiated into his Mantra, or select him for their special saviour. Again, all Hindus worship the god Ganeśa, as the remover of obstacles at the commencement of every undertaking, some of his forms (such as Dhundhīraja at Benares) receiving special worship at solitary places. In fact, the systems we have styled Vaishnavism, Śaivism, and Śaktism, with Sun worship and Ganeśa worship, constitute, so to speak, the chief staple of ordinary Hindūism.

Evidently, therefore, it must lead to confusion of thought if these five names are used to express sectarian separation from the every-day belief and practice of the bulk of the Hindu people. But we may legitimately employ the term 'sect' to designate separate societies or communities within the two leading systems of Vaishnavism and Śaivism—separate divisions, in fact, of these systems themselves, originated by particular revivalist leaders for the enforcement of greater strictness of devotion to the Hindū gods, whose worship had degenerated through the influence of Buddhism, or for the propagation of their own peculiar ideas in morals and philosophy. Such divisions are called Samprādyas, as representing the peculiar traditional

doctrine originated by such teachers, and handed down from generation to generation

One most noticeable feature in the Sampradayas founded by these reformers has been the exaggeration of the principle of faith and love (*bhakti*), so that even caste was subordinated to it, in other words, the making devotion to Krishna (Vishnu) or Śiva, but especially an enthusiastic love for the former, a bond of union stronger than all social distinctions

Those who made every other duty give way to this religious passion called themselves, not Vaishnavas or Śaivas, but Bhaktas. They made songs, music, dancing, and waving of lights (*artī*), take the place of the old Vedic Mantras, substituted vernacular prayers for those in Sanskrit, and paid special adoration to the images of Krishna. Moreover, they believed that for the attainment of beatitude it was necessary to pass through five stages: 1. That of *Santi*, or calm contemplation of the deity, 2. That of *Dasya*, or servitude, 3. That of *Sakhya*, or friendship, 4. That of *Vatsalya*, or filial affection, and 5. That of *Mādhurya*, or tender love.

In the practice of this *Bhakti* they knew no distinction of caste.

There seems, indeed, to have been a general desire on the part of the leaders of religious thought in India to follow the example of the great Buddha in his efforts to deliver the people from the tyranny of caste rules. At any rate they saw that the popularity of the doctrines they inculcated depended on their attracting adherents from all ranks, high and low. Hence, most of the great religious revivalists proclaimed the

social equality of all who enrolled themselves in the same society, as worshippers of the same deity. But just as Buddhism ultimately fell back into Brahmanism, so has every movement in the direction of equality and fraternity ended by a return, more or less complete, to the original condition of subjection to Brahmanical authority and obedience to the law of caste distinctions.

In all likelihood the Brāhmanical revival under *Śaṅkarācārya* (to whom allusion has already been made) was nothing but a reaction towards caste. It probably originated in the desire of the Brahmins to make some counter-demonstration against the Buddhistic movement. Śaṅkara himself was a strict Brahman and a great teacher of the Vedānta philosophy. He was therefore a strenuous upholder of the *Advaita* doctrine (see p. 83), and although his followers, who are very numerous in the South of India, sometimes call themselves *Śaivas*, they more generally style themselves *Smārtas*, as claiming to adhere strictly to *Smṛiti*. Śaṅkara is said to have been a native of Kerala (Malabar), and to have flourished about the end of the 7th or beginning of the 8th century. He led an erratic, controversial life, and is thought by some to have inculcated the preferential worship of the god Śiva, as identified with the Supreme Being, of whom some declare him to have been an incarnation. Tradition also makes him the founder of a Śaiva sect of ascetics, called the *Daśnamī Dandīs*, 'ten named mendicants,' so called because divided into ten classes.

Others again maintain that Śaṅkara had a prefer

ence for Vushnavism. But, as a Vedantist, he really had no preference either for Śiva or Vishnu. He is the reputed author of a vast number of treatises and commentaries on the Vedānta philosophy (including the *Ātma bodha* and *Ananda laharī*). His learning and sanctity were in such repute that he was held to have worked various miracles, amongst others, animating the dead body of a king Amaru, so as to be able to argue with the wife of a Brahman, named Mandana.¹

Let us now notice briefly, and, if possible, in chronological order, six principal divisions of Vaishnavism founded by leaders who lived at different epochs. They may be distinguished from each other by the names of their founders, thus,—

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 <i>The Nimbārkas</i> | 2 <i>The Ramanujas</i> |
| 3 <i>The Madhūācāryas</i> | 4 <i>The Ramanandas</i> |
| 5 <i>The Vallabhācāryas</i> | 6 <i>The Caitanyas</i> |

Of course, the common link of all these sects is their belief in the supremacy of Vishnu. Their difference consists in the character assigned to that god, in the practices and usages founded thereon by the leader to which each sect owes its origin, in the philosophical doctrines taught by that leader, and in distinctive sectarian marks (p. 98).

1 To begin with the Nimbarkas (vulgarly called *Nimāndīs*), perhaps the least important of the six

¹ His object is supposed to have been to become the husband of the king's widow for a time that he might learn by experience how to argue on amatory subjects with the wife of the Brahman. This is described in the celebrated poem, *Amaru-lata* to which a mystical interpretation is given.

Vaishnava sects, but the first in chronological order

The founder's name was Nimbarka or Nimbārka, and is generally supposed to have been identical with the astronomer, Bhaskaracarya, who is thought to have flourished in the 12th century

Others regard him as an actual incarnation of the Sun god, undertaken for the revival of religion and the suppression of heresy

The adherents of this sect possess few characteristic peculiarities. They worship Krishna and Radhā conjointly, and their chief scriptural authority is the Bhagavata purāṇa (see p 119). Although Nimbārka is said to have written a commentary on the Veda, this sect is not possessed of any literature of their own, the want of which they attribute to the destruction of their books at Mathura, in the time of Aurangzeb

This sect is distinguished by two perpendicular yellowish lines, made of Gopīcandana earth, drawn from the root of the hair to the commencement of each eyebrow, and there meeting in a curve, to represent the footprint of Vishnu. A second curve is sometimes added below

It should be noted here, that the poet Jayadeva, who is thought to have lived in the 12th century, may be said to have followed Nimbarka in promoting the doctrine of devotion to Krishna by his celebrated poem called Gita govindī, in which are described the loves of Krishna and the Gopīs as typical of the longing of the human soul for union with the divine¹

¹ The late Dr Adam Clarke appears to have been struck with the resemblance of this mystical poem to the Song of Solomon. See his Commentary

2 The *Ramanujas* — These come next in order of time, and are a most important sect in the South of India

They were founded by the celebrated reformer Rāmānuja, who was born at Śrī Parambatūr (about 26 miles west of Madras), and is known to have studied at Conjeveram, and to have resided at Śrī Rangam, near Trichinopoly. He probably flourished about the middle or latter part of the 12th century. The chief doctrine he promulgated was, that Vishnu is the Supreme Being, that he was before all worlds, and was the cause and creator of all things.

This sect has two grand subdivisions — 1 The *Vadagalais* or Northern School of Rāmanujas, 2 The *Tengalais*, or Southern School. The difference in their doctrines is something the same as that of Arminian and Calvinist. In philosophy they both belong to the Advaita, or non-dualistic school, but Rāmānuja, although he affirmed the ultimate oneness of man's soul with God's, declared that in the body they were practically distinct. This doctrine he called *īśhī advaita* 'qualified non duality'. One peculiarity of the sect consists in the scrupulous preparation and privacy of their meals. Another peculiarity is that they never allow mustachios on the upper lip. Moreover, they often have the *takra* and other symbols of Vishnu branded on their arms.

The frontal mark of both subdivisions of this sect consists of two perpendicular white lines drawn from the root of the hair to the commencement of each eyebrow, and meeting below in a curve. A central perpendicular reddish line is added to represent Lakshmi, and, in the case of the *Tengalais*, the white line is extended halfway down the nose, and the whole is supposed to represent the two feet of Vishnu.

3 The *Madhvas*, or *Madhvācāryas*, are Vaishnavas, but are not so important a sect as the last

They were founded by the sage Madhva, or Madhva¹ *vācārya*, otherwise called *Ānanda tīrtha* and *Purna prajna*, who was a strenuous opponent of Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita system of philosophy. He is said to have been born about the year 1200, and to have been educated in a convent at Anantēśvar.

Many of the disciples of this sect live in Mathas, or monasteries. Many of them are also simply philosophers, the school established by Madhva being called *Dvaita*, dualism, in opposition to the *A-dvaita* school, upheld by Śaṅkarācārya, and followed by the *Smārtas*. The *Dvaita* school of Madhva asserts that the supreme soul is essentially different from the human soul and from the material world. God and man have a real and eternally distinct existence.

The frontal mark of this sect, who are chiefly found in the South of India, consists of two thin perpendicular lines meeting below in a curve, like those of the Rāmānujas, but the colour is red (instead of white), and the central perpendicular line is black, being generally made with the charcoal from incense burnt before the idols of Vishnu.

4 The *Rāmānandas* (often called Rāmānandis), are sometimes confounded with the Rāmānujas, from whom they differ very slightly. Indeed, Rāmānanda, the founder, was a disciple of Rāmānuja, and a teacher of substantially similar doctrines.

He flourished at Benares about the beginning of the 14th century. His followers are numerous in Gangetic India, especially around Agra. They worship Vishnu under the form of Rāma can Ira with his consort Sītā. Their favourite work is the *Phakta mālā*, and their sectarian marks resemble those of

the Ramanujas. Their founder taught that all distinction of caste among the Vairagis and ascetic orders ought to be abolished.

Ramanandra had twelve disciples, among whom the most celebrated was a remarkable reformer named Kabir who probably lived about the end of the 14th century.

This Kabir became the founder of a distinct sect. He assailed idolatry with great boldness, and ridiculed the religious practices of his fellow-countrymen, though he allowed adoration to be paid to Vishnu or Rāma, as names for one god. He promulgated a high moral code, declaring that life was a sacred gift of God, and that the blood of men or animals ought never to be shed by his creatures. He laid great stress on truthfulness, and advocated retirement from the world for the attainment of control over the passions.

It is supposed that Nanak Shah the founder of the Sikh religion, who was born in the Panjab, near Lahore, and in the reign of Babar about the year 1500, attempted a compromise between Hinduism and Islam, was indebted to his predecessor Kabir, for his pantheistic opinions, and some of the other ideas which characterize his system.¹ His order of ascetics (corresponding to Sannyasis and Vairagis), are called Udasis.

5 The *Vallabham*jas form a very important sect in Bombay, Gujarat, and Central India.

¹ The *Adi grantha*, 'first book' which embodies his system, and is the bible of the Sikhs (prohibiting idol worship, and teaching the unity of the Godhead pantheistically) was promulgated about the time of our Reformation.

Their founder, Vallabhācārya, is said to have been born in the forest C'amparanya in 1479, and is regarded by his followers as an incarnation of Krishna. Various miraculous stories are fabled about him. For instance, his intelligence is alleged to have been so great that when he commenced learning at the age of seven, he mastered the four Vedas, the six systems of Philosophy, and the eighteen Purāṇas in four months.

After such precocity we need not wonder that at the age of twelve he had formulated his teaching, and commenced travelling to propagate his doctrines. When he reached the court of Krishnadeva, king of Vijayanagar, he was invited to a public disputation with the Saivas, in which he succeeded so well that he was elected chief Ācārya of the Vaishnavas. He then travelled for nine years through different parts of India, and finally settled in Benares where he composed seventeen works, among which was the 'Bhagavata tika subhoddhini' or commentary on the Bhagavata purāṇa, which last work, especially its tenth book (see p. 107), is the chief authoritative source of the doctrines of the sect. In philosophy he maintained Vedantist doctrines, and called his system *Sūttvānta*, 'pure non-dualism,' to distinguish it from the *Vishishtadvaita* of Ramanuja. Vallabhācārya died at Benares, or according to his followers, was transported to heaven while performing his ablutions in the Ganges.

Vallabhācārya left behind him eighty-four disciples who dispersed themselves throughout India and disseminated his doctrines. But the real successor to the Gadi (= *gaddi*) or Chair of Vallabhācārya was his second son, Vitthalnath, sometimes called Gosainji from his having settled at Gokul, near Muttra (Mathura). This Vitthalnath had seven sons, each of whom established a Gaddi in different parts of India, especially in Bombay, Kutch, Kattiwar, and Malwa, and particularly among the merchants.

and traders called Brijas and Bhrūjas. The influence of Vallabhācārya's successors became so great that they acquired the title of Mahārāja, the name Gosāin (for Gosvamin—lord of cows—an epithet of Krishna) being sometimes added.

Vallabhācārya's system is called *Pushkṛt mārga*—‘the way of eating, drinking, and enjoying oneself’, that is to say, worshipping the deity, not with fasting, self-denial, self-mortification, and penitence, but with indulgence of the natural appetites and enjoyment of the good things of the world. The god worshipped is the Krishna form of Viṣṇu with his wives the Gopīs or cowherdesses. But their idol is generally one representing Krishna in his childhood, till his twelfth year. According to the purer Vaiṣṇava faith Krishna's love for the Gopīs, and especially for his favourite Rādhā, is to be explained allegorically, as symbolizing the longing of the human soul for the Supreme. But the Vallabhācāryas interpreted it in a gross and material sense. Hence their devotion to Krishna and his wives degenerated into the most corrupt practices, and their system became rotten to the core. Their men had brought themselves to believe that they must assimilate themselves to female Gopīs in doing homage to their god, and the Mahārājas or spiritual chiefs, the successors of Vallabhācārya, were to dress like women in order to commend themselves to Kṛṣṇa.

But far more than this, these Mahārājas had come to be regarded as representatives of Krishna upon earth, and it was even believed by many that they were divine beings—incarnations of the god. Hence in the temples, where the Mahārājas did homage to the

cedence, from the superior importance of the temple and monastery of which he is head

Svami Narayan who took the name of Sahajanandi Svāmi (corrupted into Sejanunda) was not a native of Gujarat. He was born in 1780 A D., at Chapar, a town in Oudh, about sixty kos to the north east of Lucknow, and died about the year 1830, when he was forty nine years old

Living in Gujarat, he soon became stirred in spirit by the sensuality of the Vallabhaçaryas. To counteract their licentious practices, Svami Narayan, who, to a natural leaning towards *Udāra* and asceticism, joined all the energy of a great reformer, made chastity and purity of life the keynote of all his teaching¹ and ended by boldly asserting that he himself, and not Vallabhacharya, was the true incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, and that the god, in order to restore the Vāishṇava faith to its former purity, had descended in his person as a Brāhmīcāri, or Brahman under a vow of continence

6 *The Caitanyas* This sect is peculiar to Bengal and Orissa, where it is of great importance and well known

The founder, Caitanya, was born about 1485, and regarded as an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. At the age of twenty four he became an ascetic, and travelled to Jagannāth, in Orissa, where he taught Vāishṇava doctrines

He remained twelve years at Katal, engaged in intense medi-

¹ Their code of instructions is of a very pure and lofty character. It is comprised in a little work called *Sikṣā īpatrī*, a copy of which, with a commentary in Gujarāṭī and Sanskrit, was presented to me by the Maharaja of Watal on the occasion of my visit to the temple an Imena ferry at that place, over which he presides.

tation on Krishna. But this was not his only occupation. He insisted on the importance of singing (*sankirtan*) and dancing as well as of contemplation, to fit the mind for ecstatic communion with the deity, and his followers often swooned away in their fits of religious emotion. He was himself subject to fits of religious ecstasy, and died during one of them whilst bathing in the sea near Puri. After his death he was canonized, and declared to have been an incarnation of Krishna.

Caitanya's disciples soon spread themselves over Bengal. They hold that Krishna is the Supreme Being, and that *bhakti* or faith in him is more efficacious than knowledge, than subjugation of the passions, than meditation (*yoga*), than charity, virtue, or anything usually deemed most meritorious. All castes become by such faith equally pure, and all castes are equally admissible into the sect. Their chief ritual consists in constantly repeating the name Krishna. A great many treatises have been written in support of their tenets, which are highly esteemed in Bengal.

Besides the above described six principal sects of Vaishnavas, there are many others of less importance, such as the followers of *Viththal* or *Vishnoba* (a form of Krishna)¹ worshipped more especially at Pandharpur in Māhārāshtra, and the favourite of the celebrated Marathi poet Tukarama, the followers of *Dadu* (*Didu pathins*), a famous ascetic who lived at Jaipur about A.D. 1600, the *Mirabais* a subdivision of the Vallabhācārya founded by Mirabai, the wife of the Rāna of Udaipur, and several others.

¹ The images of this form of Krishna generally represent him and his wife with their hands resting on their hips.

With regard to the so-called Śaiva sects, there are a large number of Śaivas in the South of India, called *Linga-wats* (commonly Linguits and Jangamas), as wearing the Linga on their persons. They were founded by a leader named Vṛishabha, who taught the suppression of all caste distinctions, and the uselessness of all Brahmanical rites. This sect bury instead of burning their dead. Another so-called Śaiva sect, the *Paśupatas* (worshippers of Śiva in his character of *Paśupati*, lord of the soul, called *paśu*), base their philosophical doctrines on a system called Śiva siddhanta.

Śaiva ascetics are properly called Sannyasis, but they are often confounded with other orders of ascetics, called Vairāgis (supposed to be properly Vaishnavas), Gosāins, Yogis, &c. The following are other orders —

‘ The *Paramahansas*, or the highest order of Yogis who are solely occupied with meditating on Brahma, ‘ the *Aghorins* or *Aghora pathins*, who propitiate Śiva by revolting austerities, the *Ūrdhva-bahus* who extend one or both arms over the head and hold them in that position for years, the *Ākasa muniksins*, who keep their necks bent back looking up at the sky, the *Dandus*, or mendicant staff-bearers, a subdivision of whom has been already described as founded by Sankarācārya (see p. 137)

Having thus noted the principal divisions of Vaishnavas and Śaivas, which owe their origin to the great leaders of religious thought and practice in mediæval and modern times, we cannot conclude this

‘ This is the highest order of ascetics. The theory is that a Yogi who aims at perfection ought to go through six courses of austerity of twelve years each. In the last he is called a *Paramahansa*.

part of our subject without glancing at the opinions of the Brāhmas, or members of the various modern theistical societies (Samajas) now springing up in various parts of India. Their first founder was a well known Brāhman, named Raja Ram Mohun Roy, a man of great ability, born near Burdwan, in 1774. He was the first Hindu reformer that arose after the establishment of the British Rāj in India.

Besides exerting himself for the abolition of Sati (commonly called Suttee, or the burning of Indian widows with their deceased husbands), and the promotion of native education, he preached everywhere pure monotheism, endeavouring to prove that the idolatry of the Hindūs was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and to the precepts of the Veda, but he used the Indian name Brahma for the Supreme Being and called the society he founded the *Brahma samāj*, or Society of God. Its doctrines were in fact founded on a monotheistic interpretation of the Veda.

After the death of Ram Mohun Roy, his friend Divyā Nāth Tagore, a man of great weight and influence gave his support to the Brahma samāj but it languished without a leader till his son Debendra Nāth Tagore formed the nucleus of a new community, now called the Adi Samaj, or first church. This society publicly renounced idolatry, and declared their belief in the one God as defined in the Vedānta. Then a third great leader arose, Keshab Candra Sen who has recently visited England. He rejects entirely the Hindū system, including the Vedānta. His society is called the Progressive or New Samāj (*Nēu Samāj*). Their creed may be described as a belief

in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of mankind, and its theology might be well expressed by the first part of the first Article of the Church of England "There is but one living and true God—everlasting, without body, parts or passions, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things."

Other forms of theistical Samaj exist in India, for example, one called the Prarthana Samaj or *Prayer Society*, at Bombay. These have the Vedanta formula *Ekam evadvitjam* (see p. 11) inscribed over the entrance to their house of prayer, recently erected. Moreover, a new Brahman reformer named Dya nanda, has recently appeared and is attracting many adherents in the West of India. He is engaged in writing a new commentary to the Rig veda, which he interprets monotheistically, and his society is called 'the Arya samaj.'

We must acknowledge with thankfulness the good these theistical societies are doing by their uncompromising opposition to idolatry, fanaticism, superstition, and caste. They are the present protestants of India.

Nevertheless it is to be feared that, with the exception of the Progressive Samaj of Calcutta, they are not altogether free from a suspicion of pantheistic proclivities.

all the four classes, or again, between the mixed castes which resulted from such intercourse. In this way it happened that, although no man could himself enter a caste higher or lower than his own, he might by the act of marriage lead to the formation of a new mixed caste, to which a distinct occupation was assigned. It was thus, in fact, that new mixed castes were constantly created, and even castes of the lowest grade were derived from the highest by occasional perpetration of what was held to be a great abomination—the marriage of a Śūdra father with a woman of a superior caste. For example, a *Candala*, or hunter of animals, living in holes, who was the most degraded of mortals and not allowed to perform Śraddhas for his own ancestors, had a Brahman mother and Śūdra father, and the *Āyazata* or carpenter, who was also utterly despised, was half Vaiśya, half Śūdra. Again, the *Śtafakī*, dog feeder, who was a public executioner and compelled to live outside villages, was half Kshatriya, half Śūdra.

The only caste that has retained its purity to any extent is that of the Brāhmins, though examples of pure Kshatriyas may be found among the Rajputs, and some pure Vaiśyas probably exist among the Banias, or traders and shopkeepers. Moreover, instead of Manu's mixed castes—arising from the permissible intermarriage of the pure castes,—we have an almost endless number of what may be called trade-castes, resulting chiefly from associations of men engaged in the same occupations—which are being constantly created, and in which exclusiveness and restrictions in regard to social intercourse and intermarriage are enforced far more strictly than in the

original pure castes of ancient times. Many of these trade unions resemble the guilds of artisans once common in Europe and have numerous sub-castes under them¹. Each society keeps aloof from the other, and shuts itself up in its own independence. And yet within each caste, individual independence is impossible, because no individual can act alone, but only in conjunction with his caste fellows.

Probably, the original idea of caste was, that difference of complexion, or skin colour (*arva*) marked a natural separation between the grades of society. The early immigrants found parts of India occupied by Negrito aborigines almost as dark as Africans, and they themselves, by intermarriage with the primitive tribes (some of them afterwards called Śūdras), and again by further intermarriage among themselves, lost their original whiteness of complexion. Hence subsequent immigrants arriving in India, and finding those already settled there as cultivators of the soil (*tauhyas*) more dark coloured than themselves claimed a superiority of rank based upon greater purity of blood, which purity, they believed, could only be maintained by strict prohibitions against intermarriage with the lower classes. We may in this way account for the origin of the higher castes of Brahmans and Kshatriyas. Soon a theory was advanced that food had an important effect on the preservation of blood purity, and strict regulations about eating and drinking came into force. As time went on, still further safeguards were elaborated.

¹ In the North west the Kāyasth or writer caste has twelve sub-castes, and similarly the Barhai or carpenter caste has seven sub-castes, & one of each can eat together.

all classes high and low, hold it to be not only a sin, but an act of downright impiety to eat the flesh of oxen¹. Even to sit in the presence of an Englishman while engaged in eating beef is not only sinful, but produces feelings of disgust far greater than an Englishman would feel in sitting next to a Chinaman while satisfying his appetite with a meal of boiled rats. The sacredness and inviolability of the cow and ox is in real truth a universally applicable test of modern orthodox Hinduism.

So also it is not merely a breach of social propriety, but an offence against religion, for a man of high caste to eat food prepared by one of inferior caste, or for members of different castes to eat together². An important distinction, however, in regard to eating together is made between food cooked with water and dry food. The former consists of boiled rice dāl, &c., or of coarse baked cakes and this kind of food, which contains no ghrī, is eaten by all castes apart from each other, after washing their hands and feet, and removing part of their clothing. On the other hand, dry food comprehends not only all dry eatables and fruit, but also food cooked with ghrī, as well as

¹ Happily for the Hindū the cow which supplies them with their only animal food—milk and butter—and the ox which helps to till their ground were declared sacred at an early period. Had it not been so this useful animal might have been exterminated in times of famine. What is now a superstition had its origin like some other superstitions, in a wise fore-ght.

² Contrast St Paul, 1 Cor v 11—"Now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous, or an idolater or a raver or a drunkard or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat."

sweetmeats, and this may be eaten without removing any garments, without washing, and in company with other castes

To understand the process by which such ideas have acquired strength, and become absolutely dominant, it may be well to bear in mind that every Hindu has a tendency to confuse the relationship between matter and spirit. Indian philosophers assert that matter is illusory, or that it has no real existence distinct from spirit, which is the only true entity¹. Hence a Hindu is convinced that inanimate material substances may be animated with powerful spiritual forces, and that such forces may exert a mysterious influence on the well being of the immaterial part of his nature. It is therefore more important that water and food should be religiously than chemically pure. Every orthodox Hindu is perfectly persuaded that the dirtiest water, if taken from a sacred stream and applied to his body, either externally or internally, will purify his soul. Consequently he will either bathe in it or drink it with avidity, whereas the purest water is supposed to cause external and internal taint if accepted from a person of low caste. Similarly he believes that the purest food if touched by a person of low caste, or by a European (*Mleccha*) will, if eaten, contaminate his blood, and that such contamination will affect his character and prospects in this world and the next. Even the approach of a person of low caste, or no caste, or his shadow falling on food during its preparation, is

¹ There is no proper philosophical word in Sanskrit for matter, unless it be *jaṭa*, opposed to *ceṭa* spirit

thought to impart a taint which makes the most wholesome meal unfit to be eaten

With regard to the third point affected by caste, viz. professional pursuits, it should be observed that Brahmans alone are allowed free liberty of engaging in the occupations of other castes. Formerly only six acts were permitted to a strict Brahman, viz. repetition of the Veda (*adhyāyana*), teaching it to others (*adhyāpāna*), sacrificing (*yajana*), assisting at sacrifices (*ājāna*), giving (*dāna*), and receiving gifts (*prati-graha*). But even in Manu's time Brahmans might under certain circumstances become soldiers, or live by agriculture, keeping cattle, or trade (Manu, x. 80-82, 101, 102, ix 319). In the present day they are often cooks, and they may engage in any industrial arts not involving contamination and degradation.

The other castes are generally restricted to one occupation, but the names of the castes are not always a guide to the nature of their employments, these latter having sometimes in process of time become changed.

Indeed it is by opening its arms to receive associations of men engaged in the same art or trade that Hinduism, which is not in theory a proselyting creed, is continually extending itself. Any body of men, pursuing the same occupation, may form themselves into a kind of trade union, and the Brahmans will admit them into the pale of their religion, the sole conditions being that they bind themselves not to intermarry with other castes, and accept the supremacy of the Brahmans and the sacredness of the cow or ox.

The fourth and last point affected by caste, is the performance of funeral rites, and of Śrāddhas in honour of the dead. This interesting subject has been already noticed (see p. 65). We have only space to state further that considerable variation in the performance of such ceremonies prevails everywhere throughout India, and that all diversities of usage in this matter depend upon difference of caste, and of sub caste, and even sometimes of groups of families.

It only remains for us to enumerate some of the more important divisions and subdivisions of caste now found in India.¹

To begin with the Brahmans who are still religiously above all other castes, and are still in their own estimation, and in that of bigoted Hindus, the 'lords of creation' by a kind of divine right. They are divided into ten principal tribes, thus

The northern division of Brāhmans (sometimes called *Gauda*) has five tribes under it according to the proper abode, viz., the *Kanyakubja* (Kananj), *Saraswati* (North west), *Gauda* (Bengal and Delhi), *Kaithi's* (North Behar), *Utkala* (Orissa). The southern division (called *Dravida*) has also five, viz., the *Maharashtra* (Marāṭhī districts), *Telugu*, *Dravida* (Tamil), *Karnata* (Karnatic), and *Gujarata* (Gujarat). The first tribe of the northern division, viz. the *Kanyakubja*, or Kananj is again numerously subdivided, and especially into one hundred and fifty six tribes, of which one hundred are called *Urendra*, and fifty six *Kulīa* or *Kūrā* (from *Kādhā*, a district in the west of Bengal). Of the former eight and of the latter six, are regarded as *Āryas*, or noble. The six Kulīna Pārśva tribes are Barerjya, Mukharjya, Caturjya, Garguh, Goshala, and Kanjalala.

¹ The Rev. M. A. Searns, of Benares, has published a useful work on this subject, which is my chief authority here.

Again, all tribes of Brahmans are divided into *Gotras* or groups of families according as they are supposed to be derived from one or other of the seven mythical sages, *Bhrigu*, *Angiras*, *Atri*, *Viśvāmitra*, (*Kauśika*), *Kaśyapa*, *Vaśishtha*, and *Agastya*. These seven sets of *Gotras* are again subdivided into others too numerous to mention¹

Again, Brahmans are still further classified according to their supposed particular line of study, or extent of learning, as, for example, whether a man knows the *Rigveda* alone (*Rigveda śākhī*), or the *Yajurveda* (*Yajurveda śākhī*), or two Vedas (*dīvī śākhī*, commonly called *Dobe*), or three Vedas (*trīvī śākhī*, commonly *Tiveri*), or four Vedas (*caturvī śākhī* commonly *Chaube*), or some particular branch (*Śākhā*) of one of the Vedas or its *Sūtras*, or whether he is generally a learned man (*Pandita*). Other titles are the result of difference of occupation, as, for instance,—

The *Śrotarya* who performs Vedic ceremonies, the *Jyotiṣī* who performs the *Saṅskaras*, the *Vaidikī*, who recites the *Veda*, the *Sāstri* who explains the law books, the *Purāṇikī* who recites the *Purāṇas*; the *Jyotiṣī*, who knows astronomy and settles the calendar the *Aśvamedhikā* or *Vahniśāstra* (in some places called *Aśvī*) who arranges the ceremonies at times of death and mourning the *Gangā śāstra*, who sits near the Ganges and guides the pilgrims at Benares, the *Cyāmalī*, who superintends the pilgrims at Gayā the *Prayāga śāstra*, who does the same at Allahābād, the *Ōṃka*—exorciser of demons, the last five of whom are Brahmans of an inferior order, and some are regarded with contempt by high caste Brahmans.

The *Rajputs*, who represent the ancient *Kṣhatrya*, military and royal caste, and come next to the Brāhmanas, are also divided into numerous tribes or clans,

¹ There are eighty four subdivisions in *Gujarāt* alone.

so numerous to be detailed. The original occupation of this caste was twofold—that of governing and that of fighting, and even now many of the soldiers in our Sepoy (*sipahi*) regiments are Rajputs, while even with the spread of British power, a few Rajput princes remain in India, and are permitted to retain a certain amount of kingly authority. We may instance as examples the Maharajas of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Rewah, Bikanir. These claim to belong to the ancient Solar dynasty (*Surja tanśa*). Others, such as the Maharajas of Jaisalmer and Karowli, claim to be descended from the Lunar line (*Soma tanśa*).

A less pure order of Kshatriyas are the *Jats* or *Jats* (not properly entitled to the name of Rajput), who are numerous in Rājputana and the Panjab. At the head of them comes the Maharaja of Bhartpur. They are often great landowners, and often they and the Rajputs are simple agriculturists. They have numerous sub-divisions. Other clans allied to them are the Gujars, who are also generally agriculturists. Perhaps, however, one of the chief tribes of agriculturists and tillers of the soil is a mixed class called *Kumbi* (or *Kunbi*, or *Kurmi*, probably connected with Sanskrit root *kṛish*), extensively found over large districts of Hindūstan proper and Central India.

It is clear, therefore, that even Rājputs, Jats and other modern castes may represent the ancient Vaisyas who were originally the great class of agriculturists—the men who settled down (root *vas*) on the soil as husbandmen and cultivators. In fact, very few of the

¹ They claim to be descended from Kusilpa, of the Yadu branch of the Lunar line.

Kāyasthas or writers, who claim to have had a Brāhman progenitor named Citra gupta. They come next in rank to the *Vaiśya* or trading communities, and are by some affirmed to be pure *Sūdras*, though they are much above those lower classes now called *Sūdras*. The members of this caste (who are often vulgarly called *Kaits*) discharge most important duties in the government law courts and other offices. They are lawyers, clerks, accountants, keepers of registers, &c., and are generally most intelligent and well informed.

There are at least twelve sub-castes of *Kāyasthas*, divided in Bengal into eleven clans, named Gos (*ghosha*), Bose (*raia*), Mitra, De, Datt, Kor, Palit, Das, Sen, Singh, Guha. Furthermore, in Bengal there is a caste called *Vaidya* or *Baidya*, 'medical' (= *Ambashtha*, *Manu*, x. 8), which comes next in rank to the Brāhman.

It will not be possible for us to enumerate all the castes formed by associations of men engaged in various employments, trades, arts, industrial and menial occupations. Some of the commonest are the following—

brass, copper, &c. , *Telīs* (*tailin*), oilmen, *Kumbhars* or *Kumhars* (*Kumbha kara*), potters, *Dhobis* (*dha uba*) washermen, (no Hindu, however poor washes his own clothes, this operation must be performed by the Dhobi caste, who are generally known by their donkeys), *Mālīs*, gardeners, *Lonīs* (*lavana karin*) preparers of salt, *Rangaris* (*ranga karin*) dyers, *Hālūais*, confectioners, *Darīs*, tailors (who, when Muhammadans, are euphemistically called *Khalīfas* or *Calīphs*), *Nāis* (*naṣīka*) or *Hajjāis* barbers (who are also go betweeners in arranging marriages), *Ahīrs*, herdsmen, *Kāhars*, pilankin bearers, *Mallāhs*, boatmen; *Pāhs*, village watchmen. To the above may be added unclean castes, such as *Canīar* (*carma kara*) or *Mōis*, leather cutters and shoemakers, *Mīhāris* or *Shāngis*, sweepers or scavengers, *Dūms*, cane chair makers (these are the lowest of the low, they are often employed as street sweepers and in furnishing wood and fire for the burning of dead bodies), *Lūhīs*, labourers, this last name is rather applicable to any labourer than to a caste, being derived from a Dravidian word, and meaning 'one who receives (daily) wages or *lūh*'.

It is satisfactory to know that, although it is too true that caste is still the very life and soul of Hinduism, and although this very caste is not without certain good points and advantages, yet some of its most vexatious rules are gradually giving way under the pressure of steam, electricity, and European influence. Many years ago a Brahman who accidentally touched leather would have had to choose between public expiation or degradation, and expulsion from caste, whereas in 1870 a Uruja Brahman held the post of sub inspector of police in Puri itself, within the very shadow of Jagannath, although a leather belt formed part of his uniform¹

¹ Hunter's Oussa, vol. II. p. 147

CHAPTER XII

MODERN IDOL-WORSHIP, SACRED OBJECTS, HOLY
PLACES AND TIMES

No account of Hinduism can pretend to completeness without some notice of its modern idol worship, and of its numerous minor deities, semi-divine beings, consecrated objects, holy places, and seasons.

Hinduism assigns no limit to the ever increasing number of its deified existences, and we may safely affirm that there is no country in the world where so many shrines dedicated to gods and goddesses under different forms, images, symbols, and names, meet the eye as in India. In large towns temples are reckoned by hundreds, and even by thousands.

First, there are temples to the principal deities described in the previous chapters of this volume—to Śiva and his symbol (the *linga*), to Vishnu, to Krishna, to Rama, and to their respective wives—Durga, Lakshmi, Radha, Sita, under different forms and names. Then, there are occasional shrines containing images of divine heroes, such as Yudhiṣṭhira, Arjuna, Bhīma (see p 112), and of divine Rishis, such as Bharadvāja, &c. Everywhere are seen images of the god Gaṇeśa, or *Gaṇapati*, son of Śiva and Durgā. He is lord of the troops of mischievous and malignant imps who are supposed to cause obstacles and difficulties, and is therefore

invoked at the commencement of all undertakings. His bloated, dwarfish, and distorted appearance, which is like that of the Ganas of Śiva over whom he presides, indicates sensuality and love of good living, while his elephant's head is said to typify a combination of wisdom, or, perhaps, rather, of cunning and sagacity.

Again, shrines to the other son of Śiva, Skanda or Karttikeya, the leader or general of Śiva's armies or troops of demons, are very common in the south of India. He is there called Subrahmanya.

Next are found all over India shrines dedicated to the Monkey god Hanuman, the devoted ally of the great Rama in his conflict with the Rakshasas of the South of India (see p. 111). His images are smeared with the sacred colour vermilion, to denote the estimation in which he is held, and the universal admiration of his devotion as a model faithful servant. After the great war, and the subjugation of Ravana, king of Ceylon, Rama is said to have made over to Hanuman a great portion of the Deccan (i.e. Dakshina, or south country, sometimes called Rama kshetra, and sometimes Dandakaranya), of which Hanuman and his followers became the principal colonizers. Hence idols of the monkey leader are found in (and often outside) every village of the Marathi country.

Then in some towns, such as Benares, besides the principal shrines there are temples of the *Nata graha*, nine planets, that is of the Sun god (Sūrya), Moon god (Candra), Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu (dragon's head, or ascending node of the moon, and cause of eclipses), and Ketu (dragon's

tail), which, with the *Nakshatras* (see p 180), constitute a formidable galaxy of deities whose favour must be conciliated before marriages and other auspicious events can be successfully accomplished,—with many special shrines, such as those of *Anna pūrṇa*, the goddess of plenty, *Sītālā*, the goddess of small pox, *Bhairava natha* or *Danda pati*, a sort of deified police magistrate, and others too numerous to describe

Again, carved stone images of the following well-known deities of the Hindu Pantheon are not uncommon —

Indra, god of the atmosphere, *Varuna*, god of the ocean, *Kṛatva*, god of wealth, *Kama*, god of love, *Bala rama*, the Hindu Hercules, *Parasu rama*, a deified Brahman who is especially connected with the Konkan (called from him *Parashu rama kshetra*) and sometimes regarded as the god of the Konkanastha Brahmins, *Yama*, god and judge of the dead.

But shrines dedicated to their honour are unusual¹

Nor are certain groups (*gana*) of gods honoured with special shrines. The following, however, are revered —

The ten *Vīśṇu-dētas*, the eight *Vasus* (forms of fire or light), the eleven *Rudras* (see p 25), the twelve *Ādityas* (see p. 23), the *Sādhyas*, celestial beings of peculiar purity, the *Siddhas*, semi-divine beings of great perfection

But the idol worship of the towns by no means represents the common cultus of the rural districts of India. No village is too small, no locality too little frequented to be without its own peculiar religious symbols. At the tops of hills, in groves, on every

¹ I have never met with shrines to *Indra*, *Varuna*, *Kṛatva*, or *Yama*, though their images often stand in the galleries of temples, or are carved on the walls of caves

high place, and almost under every rock and stately tree, are to be seen, if not finished temples, at least rough idols or simple blocks of stone and wood, consecrated to local deities by patches of red paint, and bearing witness to the belief of the inhabitants in the presence of presiding gods and goddesses. There is, in truth, a strange mixture of aboriginal fetishism with Brahmanical pantheism in the popular religion of the mass of the Hindu people. Everything great and useful—everything strange, monstrous, and unusual, whether good or evil, is held to be permeated by the presence of divinity. It is not merely all the mighty phenomena and forces of the universe—all the most striking manifestations of almighty energy—that excite the awe and attract the reverence of the ordinary Hindu. There is not an object in earth or heaven which he is not prepared to worship—rocks, stocks, and stones, trees, pools, and rivers, his own implements of trade,¹ the animals he finds most useful, the noxious reptiles he fears, men remarkable for any extraordinary qualities,—for great valour, sanctity, virtue, or even vice, good and evil demons, ghosts and goblins, the spirits of departed ancestors, an infinite number of semi-human, semi-divine existences—inhabitants of the seven upper and the seven lower worlds—each and all of these come in for a share of divine honour or a tribute of more or less adoration. Verily, the Hindu Pantheon has a place for everybody and

¹ Every trade, profession, and calling has its tutelary divinity. Even the Thugs claimed the goddess Kali as their presiding goddess, in whose honour they murdered their victims.

everything. The deities already described are merely the occupants of its most conspicuous niches. To attempt an exhaustive enumeration of its minor gods and goddesses would be a hopeless task, and to count the ever multiplying army of its martyrs, saints, and sages, would be a simple impossibility. New shrines are continually springing up to receive the remains of holy men or ascetics—examples of extraordinary sanctity, or of some peculiar manifestation of the divine energy—who, after death, are canonized and deified.¹

With regard to animals, plants, and stones, we can only indicate those most generally revered.

Of all animals the cow is the most sacred. It typifies the all yielding earth. It is the chief source of nourishment of every Hindu. All agricultural labour depends on the ox, for no such animal as a cart horse exists in India. There is a typical 'cow of plenty' (*Kāma-dhenū*)—supposed to yield all desired objects—images of which are commonly sold in the bazaars, and bought as objects of reverence, and the letting loose of a bull (*ṛṣiśūtsarga*)—properly stamped with the symbol of Śiva—in sacred cities like Benares and Gaya, that it may be tended and revered by pious persons, is a highly meritorious act.

Serpents, also, are divine animals, they are emblematical of eternity, and are often associated with the gods, especially Śiva. Moreover, a curious

¹ Such men are generally buried, not burnt, and their tombs resorted to by hundreds of pilgrims. Tombs containing the ashes of Satis, or women who have burnt themselves with the bodies of their deceased husbands, are also common everywhere in India, and greatly revered.

race of serpents, half human, half divine, called Nagas, is supposed to exist in the regions under the earth. They are ruled over by three principal serpents, named *Sesha*, *Vasuki*, and *Takshala*. According to some, this serpent race, however fabulous, points to the former existence of a class of beings to which the serpent that tempted Eve may have belonged, before the sentence was pronounced by which it became a creeping reptile.

Monkeys, a whole army of which aided Rāma in his conquest of Ceylon, are, of course, among the most sacred of all animals. They are inviolable, and never under any circumstances to be molested. Swarms of them are encouraged to infest the vicinity of temples and consecrated buildings, where they subsist on the food offered to them by pious worshippers.

But not only animal life, plant life also is held sacred, because thought to be permeated by divinity. Perhaps the Tulsi plant (properly *Tulasi*), or holy Basil, is the most revered. It is sacred to Vishnu, and even prayers are addressed to it, as if it were itself a goddess. The marriage of the Tulsi with the god Vishnu, or Krishna, is celebrated in every Hindu family in the month Kartik.

So also the Vilva (Bel) tree, with its triple leaf, is sacred to Śiva, with his triple functions.

The Pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*) is another divine tree. It is regarded as occupied by the god Brahma, and is sometimes invested with the sacred thread as if it were a real person. All the ceremonies of Upanayana are then performed over it.

No native will willingly cut down a Tulsi plant, or

a Pipal tree, and the planting of these is always considered a religious and meritorious act

The *Aśoka* shrub is also sacred to Śiva, the *Dūrba* grass to Ganeśa, the Banyan tree to Kālā or Time, the *Arka* plant to Surya or the Sun. The *Śami* or *Acacia* is a goddess on her own account, and is supposed to contain fire. The Custard-apple is called the fruit of *Sita* (*sita phala*). The *Kuśa* is a most sacred grass.

Then as to stones. Black stones, called *Śālagrama*, with markings like those of the ammonite, are worshipped by the principal sects of *Vaiṣṇavas*, as representing Vishnu, also white agates as typifying Śiva, and red stones as symbolizing Ganeśa. Certain coral-like formations have also their religious value, and are revered as significant of particular attributes of the deity. The *Mahatmya* or divine glory of these stones is celebrated in the *Padma purāṇa*.

We pass on now to sacred places. A Hindu's craving for some holy place of pilgrimage (*tirtha*), to which he may hope to resort for a special blessing more than once in a lifetime, is not satisfied by a single Jerusalem, or a single Mecca.

India is studded with an increasing number of sacred places, from the very soil of which are supposed to exhale sanctity, salvation, and beatitude for the benefit of thousands of pilgrims who annually visit them. Pilgrimages to such spots (*tirtha yatrā*) are generally performed as acts of faith and devotion for the accumulation of religious merit, or to atone for sins.¹ Sometimes, however, they are undertaken for

¹ The pilgrims are often branded on their arms with a mark (*chāp*) of the *śikṣā* *gṛha*, i. e. *śodha*, *kṛmā* or *dharma*, to

the performance of Śraddha ceremonies in honour of departed ancestors, or for the recovery of some sick person,¹ or to convey the burnt remains of the bodies of deceased relations to some sacred shrine near a river, the object being to scatter the ashes on the purifying waters

The multiplication of places of pilgrimage proceeded very rapidly. Rivers, as sources of fertility and purification, were at an early date invested with a sacred character. Every great river was supposed to be permeated with the divine essence, and its waters held to cleanse from all moral guilt and contamination. And as the Ganges was the most majestic, so it soon became the holiest and most revered of all rivers. No sin too heinous to be removed, no character too black to be washed clean by its waters. Hence the countless temples with flights of steps lining its banks, hence the array of priests called 'Sons of the Ganges,' sitting on the edge of its streams, ready to aid the ablutions of conscience stricken bathers, and stamp them as white washed when they emerge from its waters. Hence also the constant traffic carried on in transporting Ganges water in small bottles to all parts of the country.

The confluence of the Ganges with the Jumnā

serve as an evidence of their having accomplished a particular pilgrimage. At Dvaraka nearly 5 000 persons are annually branded

¹ Colonel Sleeman records the case of a family of four persons who walked about fourteen hundred miles with a sick boy, carrying with them bottles of Ganges water to bathe the idol of Jagannath in Orissa. The change of air cured the child, but the family of course attributed the cure to the gratitude of the idol.

(Yamunā) and Sarasvatī (supposed to flow under ground) at Allahābād (Prayaga) is one of the most hallowed spots in all India. These three sacred streams form a sort of *Trī mūrti*, or trinity of rivers, often personified as goddesses, and called Mothers. Then other rivers, such as the *Godavari* (also called *Goda* and *Vṛiddhā ganga*), *Narbada* (properly *Narmada*, also called *Reva*), *Tapti* (properly *Tapati*, also called *Tapi*), *Sabarmati* (properly *Sabhramati*), *Kistna* (properly *Krishnā*), *Vena*, *Sarayu*, *Tunga-bhadrā*, and *Kaveri*, became rivals of this original sacred triad. Chapters, called *Mahatmyas*, extolling the virtue of their waters, and describing their consecration by gods and sages, were inserted in the *Purānas*. Thus, the sacredness of the *Godāvari* is said to have been revealed by Rama (to the Rishi Gotama), and that of the *Sabarmati* by Kaśyapa.

And here we may note that the whole length of the banks of all the chief rivers of India, from their source to the sea, is regarded as holy ground. To follow their course on foot is considered a highly meritorious act. A pilgrim, for example, sets out from the source of the Ganges, at Gangotri, and walks by the left bank of the river to its mouth, at Gangā sāgara, then, turning round, he proceeds by the right side back to Gangotri, whence he departed. This is called *Pradakṣiṇā*, or *Parikrama* of the river, and takes six years to accomplish. In the same way a pilgrim starts from the source of the *Narbada*, at Amarakantak,—a peak of the Vindhya chain in Gondwana,—and walks to the mouth, near Broach, and back. This takes three years. The rivers *Godavari* and *Krishna* require only two years for the same

process. Of course the merit accumulated is in proportion to the time occupied in the pilgrimage and the sacredness of the ground traversed.

But if rivers were believed to be pervaded by divinity, and their waters held capable of purging from all sin, it will not be matter of wonder that holy cities, towns, and bathing places (*stithas*) rapidly arose on their banks. It was not difficult to stamp such places with a sacred character. One or other of the gods was described as connecting himself with particular localities. Thus, the sanctity of Benares, on the Ganges, was supposed to have been communicated by the god Śiva to his son Skanda (as recorded in the *Kaṣṭhānḍa* of the *Skanda purāṇa*), and the whole town therefore became sacred to the special worship of Śiva, who is alleged to have gone through severe austerities in the neighbourhood.

This celebrated city of Benares, which has a population of about 200,000, out of which at least 25,000 are Brahmans, was probably one of the first to acquire a fame for sanctity, and it has always maintained its reputation as the most sacred spot in all India. Here, in this fortress of Hindūism, Brahminism displays itself in all its plenitude and power. Here the degrading effect of idolatry is visibly demonstrated as it is nowhere else except in the extreme south of India. Here temples, idols, and symbols, sacred wells, springs, and pools, are multiplied beyond all calculation. Here every particle of ground is believed to be hallowed, and the very air holy. The number of temples is at least two thousand, not counting innumerable smaller shrines. In the principal temple of Śiva, called *Viśveśvara*, are co

lected in one spot several thousand idols and symbols, the whole number scattered throughout the city being, it is thought, at least half a million.

Benares, indeed, must always be regarded as the Hindu's Jerusalem. The desire of a pious man's life is to accomplish at least one pilgrimage to what he regards as a portion of heaven let down upon earth, and if he can die within the holy circuit of the *Panāikośī*, stretching with a radius of ten miles around the city,—nay, if any human being die there, be he Asiatic or European,—no previously incurred guilt, however heinous, can prevent his attainment of celestial bliss.

For a long time the river Ganges and the city Benares occupied a position far above all other rivers and all other sacred cities, but as the *Āryans* spread themselves from the north west, eastward, westward, and southward, the *Brāhmins* who settled down in other places naturally became jealous of the monopoly enjoyed by those in Benares. If any natural phenomenon—a volcanic crater, a fissure in the soil, a hot spring, a cavern or rock of peculiar shape—existed anywhere, it was pressed into the service, and made to subserve the purposes of the priests. A kind of free trade in the invention of myths for the consecration of particular spots was thus introduced. For instance, in Kattiwar there is a spring, the water of which is said to have been formed from the perspiration of Krishna's body. So also many legends were connected with the great idol Jagan nath at Puri, in Orissa, which is said to contain Krishna's bones.

New *Māhātmyas* were then composed and inserted in some of the *Purāṇas* (often in the *Skanda*), making

a god or holy sage reveal and extol the praises of a particular spot intended to be elevated to a high position among the consecrated places of India.

Place after place was declared consecrated ground Prayaga at Allahabad and Gaya probably achieved a reputation for sanctity soon after Benares. Preachers were sent all over India to recite the Mahatmyas of innumerable rival localities.

To this day the priests of Benares, Gaya, Allahabad, and other sacred places send agents to every town and large railway station in India, who are commissioned to persuade pilgrims to visit their own shrines. When once a stream of pilgrims sets in a particular direction, it very soon gathers strength. One devotee follows another, and in this manner the fame of many new places is established. Pandharpur, in the Dekhan, which contains a shrine of Krishna called Vithobā (celebrated by the Marathi poet Tukaram), is a city which has in this way risen quite recently to importance.

At nearly every sacred place the number of shrines to be visited and of ceremonies to be performed occupies many days, and no pilgrim can go through all the duties required of him without the aid of the Brahmans attached to the locality, who exact fees even from the poorest, and receive large sums of money from rich persons. At some sacred places religious gatherings occur every year, at others after certain intervals. The fullest often take place once in twelve years, when the planet Jupiter enters a particular sign,¹ on which occasion the concourse of

¹ For example at Haridwar, when Jupiter enters the sign

people is so enormous that loss of life sometimes happens from overcrowding. Many think to enhance the merit of their pilgrimages by imposing on themselves the most toilsome tasks on the road, such, for example, as advancing towards their destination by continued prostrations of the body, or, as it is termed, 'measuring their lengths' for hundreds of miles.

In some ancient texts only seven principal holy towns are enumerated, viz —

Kāśī or Benares, *Mathura* or *Mutrā*, the capital of Kansa, conquered by Krishna, on the Jumna, near Agra, *Haridwar* (or *Maya*), where the Ganges descending from the Himalayas, first enters the plains, *Ayodhya* (now *Fyzabad*), the ancient capital of Rama-candra, near Lucknow, *Devaraka* the city of Krishna, in Gujarat, *Avantika* or *Ujjain*, and *Kancī* or *Conjevaram* (i. e. *Kančī puram*), near Madras.¹

Again, in others, the chief sacred cities are declared to be only three—*Benares*, resorted to for self-mortification, *Prayaga* (Allahabad) for religious shaving, and *Gajā* for *Sraddha*-ceremonies. At the last place a footprint of Vishnu is the great object of adoration.

Seven Sangamas, or river confluences—all called *Prayāgas*—are pronounced especially sacred —

That of the Ganges and Jumna, called *Dhatta prayaga*, of the Leti and Alaka nanda, called *Vishnu prayaga*, of the

Aquarius (*Kumbha*), at *Prayāga* when he enters *Mathura*, and at *Tryambak* when he enters *Leo* (*Sinha*)

¹ There are said to be two *Kāncīs*, one called *Vishnu kāncī*, and the other *Sīva kāncī*. They are merely the two great temples at either end of *Conjevaram* = *Kančī puram*.

Alaka nandā and Nanda, called Nanda prayāga, of the Pindar and Alaka nandā, called Karpa prayaga, of the Mandakini and Alaka nanda, called Rodra prayāga, of the Bhāgirathī and Mandakini, called Deva prayāga, of the Kṛṣṇā and Veṇa, called Dakṣiṇa prayaga (in the Dekhan)

The sources, and sometimes the mouths, of these and other rivers are always esteemed places of pilgrimage, for example —

Ganga ri, the source of the Ganges, *Jumnatṛī*, of the Jumna, *Amṛta kantikā*, in the Vindhya, of the Narbada, *Aśakāśet-ar*, of the Kṛṣṇā and Veṇa (Kistna), *Tūpti mūla*, of the Tapti, in Berar, *Ganga sagara*, the mouth of the Ganges.

Then there are four specially holy Dhāmas or residence of deities, viz —

Yagan nāth, at Puri, in Orissa, *Dvārakā* * (also one of the seven holy towns before named), *Diśarī-kāśira* or *Diśarī nāth*, in the Himalayas (one of the sources of the Ganges), *Kāśmīrāra*, on an island six miles from land, between India and Ceylon.

And twelve sacred places containing celebrated Langas of Śiva, viz. —

Saṃnāth, in Kāttiwār, *Mallikārguṇa*, on the 'Sri śaila mountain, in the Karnatic, *Mahākāś'a* or *Mahakāśet'ara*, in Ujjayini (Oujein), to the north of Indore, *Om kāśira*, on an island in the river Narbadī, *Kāśira* or *Kāśet'ara*, in the Himalayas, *Bhīma lankara*, at the source of the river Bhīmā, near Pune, *Vīṣṇu-nāth*, in Benares, *Trjūm'vāka nāth*, near Nāsik, on the Godāvari, *Vāṇḍya nāth* (or *Vaṇjanāth*), about 100 miles from Ahmednagar, *Aṅgunāth*, or *Aṅgeś'ara*, beyond Ahmed

* There are two Dvārakās at the distance of fourteen miles from each other, one is called Gomati Dvārakā, and the other, Beyt. When the idol was removed from the former to Dakore, a new one was placed in Gomati by Sankarācārya, who has a monastery there, while Vallabhācārya gave an idol to Beyt.

nagar in the Nizām's dominions, *Kāmanīth* or *Ramchvara*, near Adams Bridge between India and Ceylon, *Chrishnesvara*, at Ellora, near Aurungabad

Five divine lakes (*Sarovara*), or holy tanks, are also enumerated, viz —

Nārojana in Kutch, *Pushkara*, in Ajmir, *Bindu* in Sidhpur, about 60 miles from Ahmedabad, *Pampa* in the Karnatic, and *Manasar* (commonly called Manasarovar), in the Himālaya mountains

There are also four celebrated shrines of goddesses —

Maha lakshmi at Kolapur, *Bhatani* near Sholapur, *Revaka*, at Matapura, *Ieghtari* about 80 miles from Ahmednagar

And four monasteries of Śāṅkaraċarya one at each extremity of India, viz. —

Sarada matha at Gomati Dvaraka, *Sringeri matha*, in the Karnatic near Mysore *Jyotir-matha* near Badrinath one of the sources of the Ganges, and *Vardhasanatha* at Puri

A few other well known sacred places are —

Citra kote, near Allahabad the first abode of Rama and Lakshmana after their exile from Ayodhya, *Prabhara*, near Somnath and Dvaraka, where Krishna's kinsmen the Yādavas destroyed themselves, *Srinith* or *Nathdwar* near Udaipur (the temple of which has an idol from Govardhana), *Amarnath* in Kāśmir, *Jalant kha*, a small volcanic crater near Amritsar in the Panjab *Dalore* in Gujarat celebrated for the idol of Krishna (called Ran chor) brought from Dvaraka

Nasik on the Godavari, where Lakshmana cut off the nose of the demon Śūrpaṅkha, *Kuru kshetra* near Delhi, where the great battles of the Mahabharata were fought, *Ryaour*, near Citra kote, the residence of Tulsidās, *Gathoda* in Kattwar, where the body of Svami Narayana (see p 145) was

burnt, *Palitana* (or *Satrunjaya*) a sacred hill of the Jains in Kutch, *Amritsar*, in the Panjab, the sacred city of the Sikhs.

It appears, then, that almost the whole circle of the sciences—zoology, botany, mineralogy, and geography—is in India taken into the service of religious superstition. Even astronomy and chronology are utilized in the same way. If a full moon fall on a Monday, this is an astronomical coincidence that must be by all means turned to the best account. It is a moment particularly favourable for charitable acts, and a gift of one rupee at such a time is equal to one thousand at any other.

The *Nakshatras*—twenty seven constellations which in Indian astronomy separate the moon's path into twenty seven divisions, as the signs of the Zodiac do that of the sun into twelve—are regarded as deities who exert a vast influence on the destiny of men, not only at the moment of their entrance into the world, but during their whole passage through it. These formidable constellations are consulted at births, marriages, and on all occasions of family rejoicing, distress, or calamity. No one undertakes a journey or any important matter except on days which the aspect of the *Nakshatras* renders lucky and auspicious. If any constellation is unfavourable, it must by all means be propitiated by a ceremony called *Santi*.

Much the same may be said of the supposed influence of the nine *Grahas* (see p. 166), all regarded as planets. Similarly it is held that mysterious attributes and properties attach to every month of the year and every day of the month. The *Mahatmyas*, or reli-

gious excellence and value of months, such as Śrāvana, Vaiśākḥa, and especially of the intercalary month (called *Adhika masa*, *Mala masa*, *Purushotama masa*), have all been written and inserted in the Purāṇas. When the intercalary month comes round every third year, numerous preachers make the most of their opportunity, and read its Mahātmya in the streets of large towns, hoping thereby to stimulate the generosity of the people, and extract large charitable gifts. Certain sacred days at the changes of the moon are called 'Purvans,' and a glance at the Hindū calendar is sufficient to show that no nation upon earth rejoices in a longer list of holidays and festivals (*utsava*), qualified by fasts (*upavāsa*), vigils (*jagaraṇa*) and seasons of mortification. Most of these festivals and fasts are fixed for certain Tithis or lunar days, each lunation or period of rather more than twenty-seven days being divided into thirty Tithis, fifteen of which during the moon's increase constitute the light half of the month, and the other fifteen the dark half. Some festivals, however, are regulated by the supposed motions of the sun. The festivals and fasts most commonly observed throughout the year may be enumerated as follows —

1. *Makara sankranti*, or the commencement of the sun's northern course in the heavens. On this day, the first of the solar month Māgha (about the beginning of January), the sun having reached the most southern point of the ecliptic (according to the Hindū reckoning), begins his northern course (*uttarāyana*), which he continues till the end of June. It is a period of great rejoicing everywhere, and especially

at Prayāga (Allahabad), the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges, where a celebrated Melā (religious fair) takes place. In the South of India this festival is commonly called 'Pongal,' and is the commencement of the Tamil year. Cattle are decorated with garlands, led about in procession, treated with especial veneration and exempted from labour.

2 *Śrī pañcamī*, on the 5th of the light half of Māgha (January-February), in honour of Sarasvatī (called Śrī), goddess of arts and learning. Implements of writing and books are therefore worshipped (see pp. 90, 91).

3 *Śrī a rātri*, in honour of Śiva, held on the 14th of the dark half of Māgha (about the middle or end of February). A strict fast is observed during the day, and a vigil held at night, when the Linga is worshipped. At this season many pilgrims flock to the places dedicated to Śiva.

4 *Holi*, now generally identified with the *Dola-jatra* or swinging festival, celebrated as a kind of Hindū Saturnalia, or Carnival, and very popular all over India. It commences about ten days before the full moon of Phalguna (February-March), but is usually only observed for the last three or four days, terminating with the full moon. During this festival boys dance about in the streets and the inhabitants of the houses sprinkle the passers-by with red or yellow powder, or play practical jokes. Towards the close of the festival a bonfire is lighted and games (representing the frolics of the young Kṛishna) take place round the expiring embers.

5 *Rama navamī*, the birthday of Rāma-candra on the 9th of the light half of the month Cāitra (March

April), kept by some as a strict fast. The temples of Rama are illuminated, and the image of Rāma adorned with costly ornaments. The Ramayana is read in the temples, and Nautches are kept up during the night.

6 *Nāga pñcamī*, a festival in honour of the Nagas (see p 169), on the 5th day of the light half of Śrāvana.

7 *Kṛishṇa janmāshṭamī*, the birthday of Kṛishṇa, on the 8th of the dark half of the month Bhādra, and in the south of Śrāvana (July August), one of the greatest of all Hindū holidays. The months of the Northern and Southern Brāhmins differ in Kṛishṇa paksha.

8 *Ganeśa-chaturthī*, the birthday of Ganeśa, on the 4th of the light half of the month Bhādra (August September). Clay figures of the deity are made, and after being worshipped for two days, or in some cases ten days, are thrown into water.

9 *Durgā puja*, or *Nava ratni*, commencing on the 1st, and ending on the 10th day of the light half of Āshvina (September October). This festival, celebrated in Bengal and other parts of India, is supposed to be connected with the autumnal equinox. It is held in commemoration of the victory of Durgā, wife of Śiva, over a buffalo-headed demon (*Mahishasur*). Her image is worshipped for nine days, and then cast into the water. The tenth day is called *Vijaya dashmī*, or *Dashāharā*.

10 *Rām-līlā*—On the day when the Bengālis assign their images of Durgā to the waters, the Hindūs of other provinces celebrate the Rāmā līlā, a dramatic representation of the carrying off of Sitā,

concluding with the death of Ravana (see p 111), of which the 9th day of the Durga pūjā is the anniversary

11 *Dipālī* or *Dīrālī* (properly *Dīpālī*), 'the feast of lamps' on the last two days of the dark half of Āśvina (September-October), and the new moon and four following days of Kārttika, in honour of Vishnu's wife Lakshmi, and of Śiva's wife Bhavānī (Parvati)

12 *Kārttika pūrṇimā*, the full moon of the month Kārttika (October-November), a festival kept in honour of Śiva's victory over the demon Tripurasura.

We must now bring our account of Hinduism to a close. We cannot hope to have succeeded in unravelling all the knots of an intricate subject. Sufficient at least has been written to show that the Hindus are a profoundly religious people. A religion of some kind they must have—a religion which will stir the depths of the heart, and give room for the exercise of faith and love.

The ancient fortress of Hinduism, with its four sides, Monotheism, Pantheism, Dualism, and Polytheism, is everywhere tottering and ready to fall. Let not Christianity undervalue its obligations to education which has so to speak, served as a mighty lever for upheaving the massive fabric of the Hindu system. But the education we are giving in India has little effect on the heart, and has certainly no power to regenerate it. What then is to become of the masses of the people when their ancient faith sinks from beneath their feet? Only two other homes are before them—a cold theism and a heart-stirring Christianity. They are both already established in

the soil of India. But Christianity is spreading its boundaries more widely, and striking its foundations more deeply. It appeals directly to the heart. It is exactly suited to the needs of the masses of the people of India. In Christianity alone is their true home.

But much has still to be done to convince them of this. Of course, too much stress can scarcely be laid on the degrading tendencies of idolatry. Yet there are three points which ought to be still more forcibly insisted on by our missionaries as distinguishing Christianity from all other systems, first, the co-ordination and union of the human and divine, of man's work and God's work, as exhibited, for example, in our Sacred Scriptures, secondly, the everlasting permanence and even intensification of the personality of man as distinct from the personality of God, thirdly, the perfect personality of God as revealed in Christ. As to the third point, it should be made quite clear that Muhammadans, Hindūs, Buddhists, and Jains have nothing parallel to the great truth of the perfect personality of the God-man Christ.

Let the proselyting Muslim proudly declare, when confronted with the opponents of his own creed in the bazaars of India, that he will meet his foe with no other weapon than the sword of the Kurān. Let the Hindū philosopher calmly intrench himself behind the Pantheism of his Veda, and the theistical Brahma behind the strength of his dogma that 'God is one,' while the infidel Jain looks down with serene apathy from the heights of his atheism on a struggle to which he is indifferent. Then let the Christian missionary, without despising

the formidable Goliaths to which he is opposed, but with the quiet confidence of a David in the strength of his own weapons, go forth fearlessly with the simple sling and stone of the Gospel in his hand and do battle with his enemies, not forgetting to use the Sword of the Spirit with its nine irresistible thrusts—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance

Much ground, indeed, has been already won by the soldiers of the Cross, but to secure a more hopeful advance of Christianity throughout India, a large accession to the missionary ranks of well trained men, thoroughly conversant with the systems against which they have to contend, and prepared to *live* as well as preach the simple story of the Gospel of Christ, is urgently needed. And far more than this is needed for the complete triumph of God's truth in India. Nothing less is demanded of us Englishmen, to whose charge the Almighty has committed the souls and bodies of two hundred and fifty millions of His creatures, than that every man among us, whether clerical or lay, should strive to be a missionary according to the standard set up by the first great Missionary—Christ Himself. Let no lower standard of our duty satisfy us. So will the good time arrive when not only every ear shall have heard the good news of the reconciliation of man to his Maker, but every tongue also of every native of India—from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya mountains—shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father

subjects of human knowledge, including, amongst others, the process of reasoning and laws of thought

The Nyaya proper propounds in its first Sutra sixteen topics, the first of which is *Pramana*, i.e. the means or instrument by which Prama, or the right measure of a subject, is to be obtained. The different processes by which the mind arrives at true and accurate knowledge are four, viz — a *Pratyaksha*, 'perception by the senses', b *Anumana*, 'inference', c *Upamana*, 'comparison', d *Shabdi*, 'verbal authority,' or 'trustworthy testimony,' including Vedic revelation.

The treatment of the second of these four, 'inference,' indicates that the Hindus have not, like other nations, borrowed their logic from the Greeks. It is divided into five *Avyayas* or 'members' : 1 The *pratijna* or proposition (stated hypothetically) 2 The *hetu*, or reason 3 The *udaharana*, or example (= major premiss) 4 The *upanaya*, or application of the reason (= minor premiss) 5 The *sampanna*, or conclusion : i.e. the proposition re-stated as proved. This method of splitting an argument into five divisions is thus illustrated : 1 The hill is fiery, 2 for it smokes, 3 whatever smokes is fiery as a kitchen hearth, 4 this hill smokes, 5 therefore this hill is fiery.

Here we have a combination of enthymeme and syllogism which seems clumsy by the side of Aristotle's conciser method, but it possesses some advantages when regarded not as a syllogism but as a full and complete rhetorical statement of an argument.

Perhaps the most noticeable peculiarity in the Indian method, stamping it as an original and independent analysis of the laws of thought, is the use of the curious terms *Vyapti*, 'pervasion', *Vyaptaka* 'pervader', and *Vyapyaya*, 'to be pervaded.' These terms are employed in making a universal affirmation, or in affirming universal distribution, as, for example, 'Wherever there is smoke there is fire.' In such a

case an Indian logician always expresses himself by saying that there is an invariably pervading concomitance of fire with smoke. Fire is therefore called the pervader, and smoke the pervaded, and the argument would be thus briefly stated by a *Naiyāyika* 'The mountain has invariably fire-pervaded smoke, therefore it has fire.'

The second topic of the Nyaya proper is *Prameya*, i.e. the subjects of *Pramā*, or the subjects about which right knowledge is to be obtained. These are twelve viz 1 Soul (*ātman*) 2 Body (*śarīra*) 3 Senses (*indriya*) 4 Objects of sense (*artha*) 5 Understanding or intellection (*buddhi*) 6 Mind (*manas*) 7 Activity (*pravṛtti*) 8 Faults (*doṣa*) 9 Transmigration (*pretya bhāva*) 10 Consequences or fruits (*phala*) 11 Pain (*duḥkha*) 12 Emancipation (*apavarga*).

With regard to the fourteen other topics, they seem to be not so much philosophical categories as an enumeration of the regular stages through which a controversy is likely to pass. In Indian argument slides into wrangling disputation even more easily than in Europe, and the remaining topics certainly illustrate very curiously the captious propensities of a Hindu disputant, leading him to be quick in repartee, and ready with specious objections to the most conclusive argument.

question must be examined—every possible objection stated—and so a further *Vāda*, or ‘controversy,’ takes place, which of course leads to *Jalpa*, ‘mere wrangling,’ followed by *Vitanda*, ‘cavilling’, *Hittv-abhasa*, ‘fallacious reasoning’, *C'hala*, ‘quibbling artifices’, *Jati*, ‘futile replies’, and *Nigraha sthana*, ‘the putting an end to all discussion,’ by a demonstration of the objector’s incapacity for argument.

After enumerating these sixteen topics, Gotama proceeds to show how false notions are at the root of all misery. For from false notions comes the fault of liking, disliking, or being indifferent to anything, from that fault proceeds activity, from this mistaken activity proceed actions involving either merit or demerit, which merit or demerit forces a man to pass through repeated births for the sake of its reward or punishment. From these births proceeds misery, and it is the aim of philosophy to correct the false notions at the root of this misery.

The Vaiśeṣika (supplement of the Nyāya)

The Vaiśeṣika may be called a supplement of the Nyāya proper. It is attributed to a sage named Kanada (‘atom-eater’) and is not so much a branch of the Nyāya as a development of it, extending the system to physical investigations, which it conducts very imperfectly, it is true, and often with strange fancies and absurd blunders but, nevertheless, with occasional exactness, and not unfrequently with singular sagacity. It is perhaps, the most interesting of all the systems, both from its more practical character and from the parallels it offers to European philosophical ideas. It begins by arranging its inquiries under seven *Padārthas*, or categories (i.e. enumeration of certain general properties or attributes that may be predicated of existing things), which, as they

are more properly categories than the topics of the Nyāya proper, are now the generally received categories of the Naiyāyikas. They are as follows — 1 Substance (*dravya*), 2 Quality or property (*guṇa*), 3 Act or action (*karma*), 4 Generality or community of properties (*sāmānya*), 5 Particularity or individuality (*viśeṣa*), 6 Coherence or perpetual intimate relation (*samavāya*), 7 Non-existence, or negation of existence (*abhāva*)

Kaṇada, however, enumerated only six categories: the seventh was added by later writers

The seven categories have most of them subdivisions. Those of the first category, *Dravya*, substance, are nine, to wit—earth, water, light, air, ether, time, space, soul, and the internal organ or mind

The first four of these nine, and the last (viz. *Manas*, 'the mind'), are held to be atomic, and the first four are both eternal and non-eternal, non-eternal in their various compounds, eternal in their ultimate atoms to which they must be traced back

As to the second category, *Guṇa*, 'quality,' there are seventeen qualities inherent in the nine substances, viz colour, savour, odour, tangibility, numbers, extensions, individuality, conjunction, disjunction, priority, posteriority, intellections, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volitions. Seven others are said to be implied, viz gravity, fluidity, viscosity, self reproduction, merit, demerit, and sound, making twenty four in all

Sixteen of these qualities belong to material substances. The other eight—viz intellection, volition, desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, merit, and demerit—are the properties of the soul

The third category, *Karma*, 'act,' consists of five kinds of acts, viz elevation, depression, contraction, dilatation, and motion, and the fourth, *Sāmānya*, generality of properties, is said to be twofold, viz higher and lower generality, to wit, that of genus and of species

The fifth category, *Viśeṣa*, 'particularity,' belongs

to the nine eternal substances of the first category, all of which have an eternal ultimate difference, distinguishing each from the other. Hence the system is called *Vaiśeṣika*.

The sixth category, *Samānya*, 'coherence,' is of only one kind. It is the coherence between a substance and its qualities, between atoms and what is formed out of them, between a genus or species and its individuals, between any object and the general idea connected with it, and is thought to be a real entity.

As to the seventh, *Abhāva*, 'non-existence,' four kinds are specified, viz. antecedent non-existence, cessation of existence, mutual non-existence (as of a jar in cloth), absolute non-existence.

In the *Vaiśeṣika* system the formation of the world is supposed to be effected by the aggregation of atoms. These are innumerable and eternal, and are eternally aggregated, disintegrated, and redisintegrated by the power of *Adṛiṣṭa* (see p. 51). An atom is defined as 'something existing, having no cause, and eternal.' It is, moreover, described as less than the least, invisible, intangible, indivisible, imperceptible by the senses, and each atom has a *Vīśeṣa* or eternal essence of its own. The combination of these atoms is first into an aggregate of two. Three of them, again, are supposed to combine into a particle, called *Trasarenu*, which, like a mote in a sunbeam, has just sufficient magnitude to be perceptible.

With regard to a Supreme Being, the name of *Īśvara*, 'Supreme Lord,' is introduced once into Gotama's *Sūtras*, but is not found in Kanada's.

Probably the belief of both was that the formation of the world was simply the result of *Adṛiṣṭi*, 'the unseen force,' derived from the works or acts of a previous world. This force becomes in *Hindū* philosophy a kind of god, if not the only god. Later *Naiyāyika* writers, however, affirm the existence of a Supreme Soul (*paramatman*), distinct from the living

human Soul (*jīvatman*), and this Supreme Soul is described by them as eternal, immutable, omniscient, without form, all pervading, all powerful, and more over as the framer of the universe

Again, they hold the living individual souls of men (*jīvatman*) to be eternal, manifold, eternally separate from each other, and distinct from the body, senses, and mind yet capable of apprehension volition, desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, merit and demerit, and they hold them to be infinite, ubiquitous, and *diffused everywhere throughout space*, so that a man's soul is as much in England as in Calcutta, though it can only apprehend and feel and act where the body happens to be

The Nyaya idea of the mind (*manas*), which it calls an internal organ is that it is like the soul, a Dravya, or eternal substance. Instead, however, of being diffused everywhere like the soul, it is atomic like earth, water, fire, and air. In fact, it can only admit one thought at a time. If it were infinite like the soul, all apprehensions and conceptions might be contemporaneous which is impossible.

It is clear then that the Vaiśeṣika cosmogony is dualistic in the sense of assuming the existence of *eternal atoms*, side by side either with *eternal souls*, or with the Supreme Soul of the universe. It is opposed to any theory which would make an impure and evil world spring from a pure and perfect spirit. Nor does it undertake to decide positively what it cannot prove dialectically—the precise relation between soul and matter.

The Sāṅkhya

The Sāṅkhya philosophy, founded by a sage named *Aśvika*, though probably prior in date, is generally studied next to the Nyaya, and is more categorically dualistic. It wholly repudiates the notion that impure matter can originate from pure spirit, and, of course, denies that anything can be produced out of nothing.

The following aphorisms propound its doctrine of evolution —

"There cannot be production of something out of nothing, that which is not cannot be developed into that which is. The production of what does not already exist (potentially) is impossible, like a horn on a man, because there must of necessity be a material out of which a product is developed, and because everything cannot occur everywhere at all times, and because anything possible must be produced from something competent to produce it."

In the Sankhya, therefore, instead of an analytical inquiry into the universe as actually existing, arranged under topics and categories, we have a synthetical system starting from an original primordial *Tattva* or 'eternally existing essence,' called *Prakriti*, 'that which evolves, or produces, or brings forth (*prakaroti*) everything else,' and described in the following aphorisms —

"From the absence of a root in the root, the root of all things is rootless."

"Even if there be a succession of causes (one before the other), there must be a halt at some one point, and so *Prakriti* is only a name for the primal source (of all productions)."

It should be noted, at the outset, that *Prakriti*, though a subtle elementary essence, is yet itself supposed to be made up of three constituent principles or elementary substances in equipoise, called *Gunas*, (from the word *guna*, a cord, because they bind the soul with a triple bond), viz goodness or purity (*sa'tva*), passion or activity (*rajas*), and darkness or stolidity (*tamas*). These three Sankhyan *Gunas* are constantly referred to in Indian literature, and it is most important that the student of Hinduism should endeavour to understand the ideas they convey. They are by no means to be confounded with the Nyaya *Gunas* (see p. 191). They are the actual substances or ingredients of which *Prakriti* is constituted, just as trees are of a forest. Moreover, they are supposed to make up the whole world of sense evolved out of *Prakriti*, although in this case they are not conjoined

in equal quantities, but in varying proportions, one or other being in excess¹. In the case of a man, they make him divine and noble, thoroughly human and selfish, or bestial and ignorant, according to the predominance of goodness, passion, or darkness respectively.

This remarkable doctrine of three eternal principles, *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*, may be called the Sankhyan trinity, just as the idea of *Sac cid ananda* (see p 52) may be regarded as the trinity of the Vedantist.

Beginning, then, from the original eternal rootless germ *Prakṛiti*,² (also called *Pradhāna*, chief one, *Ajākta*, unevolved, *Māya*, power of illusion), the Sankhya counts up (*sankhyati*) synthetically (whence its name of 'synthetic enumeration') twenty three other Tattvas or entities,—all productions of the first, and evolving themselves spontaneously out of it, as cream out of milk, or milk out of a cow,—while it carefully distinguishes them all from a twenty fifth, *Puruṣa*, the soul or spirit, which is in its own nature destitute of Gunas, though liable to be bound by the Gunas of *Prakṛiti*.

The process is thus stated in the Sankhya karika

"The root and substance of all things (except soul) is *Prakṛiti*. It is no production. Seven things produced by it are also producers. Thence come sixteen productions (*vikṛita*). Soul the twenty fifth essence is neither a production nor producer.

¹ It cannot be too often repeated that they are not to be confounded with the Nyāya Gunas. In fact they are evidently rather substances or principles than qualities though *guṇa* also means 'quality', and although such expressions as goodness, purity, &c., convey more the notion of a quality than of a substance. May not the whole idea have been suggested by the three forms of matter? At any rate even modern chemists acknowledge a kind of material triad of substances,—solid, liquid and gaseous.

² The translation *Nature*, often given for this word is altogether misleading. Better equivalents would be such expressions as Creative force, Evolver, Producer, &c.

The first production of the eternal Producer is *Buddhi* or 'intelligence,' also termed *Mahat*, from its being the *Great* source of the next producer, *Ahaṅkāra*, and the eleventh organ, *Manas*). Third in order comes this *Ahaṅkāra*, the 'I maker,' i.e. self-consciousness, or the sense of individuality, which produces the next five principles, called *Tanmātras*, or 'subtle elementary particles.' These eight constitute the producers.

Then follow the sixteen that are productions (*Vikāra*) only. And first in order, as produced by the *Tanmātras*, come the five grosser elements (*mahābhūta*), as follows —

1 *Ākāśa*, 'ether,' with the distinguishing property or substratum of sound (which is the *vishaya* or object for a corresponding organ of sense, the ear). 2 *Vāyu*, 'air,' with the property of tangibility (which is the *vishaya* for the skin). 3 *Tejas* or *Jyotiḥ*, 'fire or light' with the property of form or colour (which is the *vishaya* for the eye). 4 *Āpas*, 'water,' with the property of taste (which is the *vishaya* for the tongue). 5 *Prithaṇī* or *bhūmi*, 'earth,' with the property of odour or smell (which is the *vishaya* for the nose).

the mere unintelligent original germ, is the third, called *Ahankara*, 'self-consciousness,' the Sankhya appears to maintain that the whole world of sense is practically created by the individual Ego, who is, nevertheless, quite distinct from the soul, as this soul is supposed to possess in itself no real consciousness of separate individuality, though deluded by it¹

But although Prakriti is the sole originator of creation, yet, according to the pure Sankhya, it does not create for itself, but rather for each individual soul, nor indeed does it create at all to any practical purpose unless it comes into union with Purusha, like a crystal vase with a flower. Souls, indeed, exist eternally separate from each other, and from the Evolver Prakriti, and with whatever form of body they may be joined they are held to be all intrinsically equal, and each retains its individuality remaining one and unchanged through all transmigrations. But each separate soul is a witness of the act of a separate creation without participating in the act. It is a looker on, uniting itself with unintelligent *Prakriti*, as a lame man mounted on a blind man's shoulders, for the sake of observing the phenomena of creation, which Prakriti herself is unable to observe.

It appears, too, that all Prakriti's performances are solely for the benefit of soul, who receives her favours ungratefully. Indeed the object of the Sankhya system is to effect the liberation of *Purusha* or soul from the fetters which bind it, in consequence of its union with Prakriti. This is done by conveying the *Prama*, or correct knowledge of the twenty-four constituent principles of creation and rightly discriminating the soul from them, its *Pramanas* (see p. 188),

This idea of personal and individual creation is what chiefly distinguishes the Sankhya from the pantheism of the Vedanta, which denies all real personal individuality.

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Each of these elements, after the first, has also the property of the preceding besides its own.

Next follow the eleven organs produced, like the *Tanmātras*, by the third producer, *Ahaṅkāra*. These are the five organs of sense, the five organs of action, and an eleventh organ standing between them, viz. *Manas*, 'the mind,' which is regarded as an internal organ of perception, volition, and action. The eight producers, then, with the five grosser elements and the eleven organs, constitute the true elements, and constituent substances of the phenomenal world. As, however, the most important of the producers, after

¹ The *buddhindriyas*, or organs of sense, are ear, skin, eye, nose, tongue, the *karmendriyas*, organs of action, are larynx, hand, foot, excretory and generative organs.

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or ' means of obtaining the correct measure of existing things being reduced from four to three, viz, perception by the senses (*dṛṣṭā*), inference (*anumāna*), and credible assertion or trustworthy testimony (*apṭaśruti*)

No one can doubt that the Sankhyan view of the soul is inferior to that of the Nyaya which ascribes to it, when joined to mind, activity, volition, thought, and feeling. Obviously, too, the pure Sankhya is more atheistical than the pure Nyaya, for if the Creation produced by the Evolver, *Prakṛti*, has an existence of its own independent of all connection with the particular Purusha to which it is joined there can be no need of an intelligent Creator of the world, or even of any superintending power.

Notwithstanding these atheistical tendencies, the charge of unorthodoxy is evaded by a confession of faith in the Veda. Some adherents of the Sankhya maintain the existence of a supreme Soul, called *Hiranyagarbha* and of a general ideal phenomenal universe with which that supreme Soul is connected and into which all the subcreations of inferior souls are gathered.

It is remarkable that this singular theory of the relationship between spirit and matter, involving as it does a strange jumble of physical and metaphysical subtleties, has always had peculiar charms for the Hindu mind. Not that the uneducated masses could make anything of the mysticism of a primordial eternal germ evolving out of itself twenty three substances to form a visible world for the soul described as apathetic, inactive, devoid of all qualities, and a mere indifferent spectator, but that ordinary men are only too prone to accept any theory of the origin of the universe which makes the acts of the Creator harmonize with their own operations and the phenomena which surround them. Even the most illiterate

Hindu, therefore, was well able to understand and adopt the idea of a universe proceeding from Prakṛiti and Puruṣa as from father and mother. Indeed the idea of a union between the female principle, regarded as an energy or capacity (*śakti*), and the male principle, regarded as a generator, is, as we have already seen (see p. 123), of great antiquity in the Hindu system.

It is noteworthy that Buddhism, which represented many of the more popular philosophical ideas of the Hindus, perhaps as early as the sixth century B.C., has more in common with the Sāṅkhya philosophy than with any of the other systems.

Even the cosmogony of Manu, although a compound of various theories, presents a process of evolution very similar to that of the Sāṅkhya.

Perhaps, however, the extreme popularity of the Sāṅkhyan idea of a union of two principles is best shown by the later cosmogony and mythology. In the Purāṇas and Tantras, the great repositories of the popular Hindu creed Prakṛiti becomes a real mother of the universe, taking the form of female personifications, who are regarded as the wives or female energies and capacities (*śakti*) of the principal male deities, to whom, on the other hand, the name Puruṣa, in the sense of the Supreme Soul, or primeval male, is sometimes applied. This is especially the case, as we have shown in chapter ix., with the *śakti*, or female energy of Śiva, worshipped by vast numbers as the true 'mother of the universe'.

From the popularity of the Sāṅkhya and its influence on the later mythology we shall not be surprised to find that there is a common saying in India,

¹ This is the best explanation of the fact, that the shrines of the *linga* and *vama* are more common than any other throughout India.

to a kind of *logical method* commencing with the proposition to be discussed the doubt arising about it, the *Purva paksha* or *prima facie* and wrong view of the question, the *Uttara paksha* or refutation of the wrong view, and the conclusion.

Its philosophical discussions amount to a kind of critical commentary on the Brahmana or ritual portion of the Veda, and it differs from the Vedanta in interpreting the Mantras according to the obvious literal sense, and not any supposed occult meaning underlying the text. Jaimini was, in real truth, the opponent of both rationalism and theism. Not that he denied a God, but the tendency of his teaching was to allow no voice or authority to either reason or God. The Veda was practically the only god. A Supreme Being might exist, but was not necessary to the system. The Veda, said Jaimini, is itself authority, and has no need of an authorizer. His first aphorism states the whole aim and object of his system, viz, a desire to know *Dharma* or duty, which consists in the performance of the rites and sacrifices prescribed by the Veda because they are so prescribed, without reference to the will or approval of any personal god, for *Dharma* is itself the bestower of reward. Some recent Mīmāṃsakas, however, maintain that *Dharma* ought to be performed as an offering to a Supreme Being and that it is to be so performed as a means of emancipation.

Some singular speculations occur in Jaimini's system. His belief in the inherent authority of the Veda, independently of any divine Reverber, leads him to assert its own absolute eternity, and he declares that only eternally pre-existing objects are mentioned in it. Other strange doctrines maintained by him are that there is a perpetual connection between a word and its sense and that sound is eternal or rather, that an eternal sound underlies all temporary sound.

Here, then, we have presented to us a different view of the origin of the world. In the Nyāya it proceeded from a concurrence of eternal atoms, in the Sāṅkhya from one original creative force called *Prakṛti*, the latter not operating independently, but only when associated with souls, which, according to one view, are presided over by a supreme soul. In the Vedānta, there is really no individual soul at all, is distinct from the universal Soul. Hence, the doctrine of this school is called *Advaita*, 'non dualism'. The universe exists, but merely as a product of the one eternal Essence, when overspread by *Māyā* or Illusion.

Badarayana's first aphorism states the object of the whole system in one word, viz, *Brahmajijñāsa*, 'the desire of knowing Brahma' (neut.)

In the second aphorism this Brahma is defined to mean, 'that from which the production of this universe results'.

From other portions of the aphorisms it appears that the one universal essence, called *Brahmā* (not *Brahma*), is to the external world what yarn is to cloth, what milk to curds, what earth to a jar, what gold to a bracelet. This Essence is both creator and creation, actor and act. It is itself Existence, Knowledge, and Joy (*Sacchidananda*),¹ but at the same time, without parts unbound by qualities without action, without emotion, having no consciousness such as is denoted by 'I' and 'Thou' apprehending no person or thing, nor apprehended by any, having neither beginning nor end, immutable, the only real entity.

¹ This is the Vedānta's trinity corresponding very remarkably as Mr Robson observes with the Author of Existence (the Father) the Source of Wisdom (Christ the Word) and the Source of Joy (the Holy Spirit) thus the Veda the Vedānta and the Bhakti sūtras all point to the triple nature of the Supreme Being.

If this be true, then pure Being must be almost identical with pure Nothing, so that the two extremes of Buddhist Nihilism and Vedantic Pantheism far as they profess to be apart, appear in the end to meet.

The creed of the Vedantist does not necessarily imply that the world is all *Māyā*, 'mere Illusion'. A true Vedantist, though he affirms that Brahmi alone is real, allows a practical (*vyavaharika*) existence to souls, the world, and *Iśvara*, as distinguished from real (*paramartha*) and from illusory existence (*pratibhasika*). How, indeed, can it be denied that external things exist when we see them and feel them at every instant? But how, on the other hand, can it be maintained that an impure world is evolved from a pure spiritual essence? To avoid this difficulty, the Supreme Being is represented as conoecting himself, from all eternity, with illusion or ignorance, in order to draw out from himself, for his own amusement, the separate individuated souls and various appearances, which are not really the product of his own pure essence, but mere apparent phenomena. Indeed the external world, per ozal souls, and even *Iśvara* the personal God, are often described as created by an actual power which the Vedānta, like the Sankhya, calls either *Māyā* Illusion or *Āvidyā*, generally translated 'Ignorance,' but perhaps better rendered by 'False knowledge.'

Of this power there are two distinct forms of operation, that of envelopment (*ataraṇa*), and that of projection (*vikṣepa*), which last projects on the soul the appearance of a world, producing first the five subtle elements and drawing out from them seventeen subtle bodies (comprising the five organs of sense, the five organs of action, the five vital airs with *Indriya* and *manas*), and the five gross elements, as in the Sankhya.

By reason of *Avidyā*, then, the *Jivātman*, or living soul of every individual, mistakes the world as well as its own body and mind for realities, just as a rope in a dark night might be mistaken for a snake. The moment the personal soul is set free from this self-imposed ignorance by a proper understanding of the truth through the Vedānta philosophy, all the illusion vanishes, and the identity of the *Jivātman* and of the whole phenomenal universe with the *Paramātman*, or Supreme Soul, is re established.

It may be noted that in the Vedānta the living soul of individuals, when separated off from the Supreme Soul, is regarded as enclosed in a succession of cases (*śāla*) which envelop it, and, as it were, fold one over the other, like the coats of an onion.¹

Of course the Vedānta theory, if pushed to its ultimate consequences, must lead to the neglect of all duties, religious and moral, of all activity, physical and intellectual, and of all self-culture. If 'everything be God, then you and he and I must be one. Why should any efforts be made for the advancement of self or for the good of others? Everything we have must be common property.

Eclectic School.—The Bhagavad Gītā.

The Bhagavad gītā,² commented on by the great Vedāntic teacher Śaṅkarācārya (see pp 83, 203), may

¹ These are called *Vijnāna-maya*, *Māno maya*, *Prāṇa maya*, *Ānānā maya*, and a fifth is named *Anānā maya*.

² I am obliged to repeat here, as in some of the preceding pages of this work, much of what I have already described in the work called 'Indian Wisdom,' for the simple reason that it is essential to my present subject; and I find myself unable to vary my descriptions without spoil to them.

own. This he has done with great perspicuity and beauty of language in the Bhagavad gita, combining various theories into one system, by interweaving, so to speak, threads from the Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta, so as to form a many-coloured woof of thought, which is shot across a stiff warp of the doctrine of love (*bhakti*) for Krishna, and of stern devotion to caste duties (*dharma*). Of these cross threads the most conspicuous are those of the Sankhya, for which the author of the Gita has an evident predilection.

As a necessary result of its composite character, the work is, of course, full of inconsistencies. The whole composition is skilfully thrown into the form of a dramatic poem, something after the manner of the book of Job or a dialogue of Plato. The speakers are the two most important personages in the Mahabharata—Arjuna and Krishna. Arjuna is, perhaps, the real hero of that epic. He is the bravest, and yet the most tender hearted of the five sons of Pandu. The god Krishna, who is identified with Vishnu, and in this philosophical dialogue is held to be the Supreme Being himself, had taken form as the son of Devaki and Visudeva, who, was brother of Kunti, wife of Pandu. Hence the god was cousin of the sons of Pandu, brother of Dhritya-rashtra, the sons of these brothers being of course related as cousins to each other. In the great war which arose between the two families of Pandu and Dhritya-rashtra (see p. 112), representing two Kshatriya races contending for supremacy, Krishna refused to take up arms on either side, but consented to act as the charoteer of Arjuna, and to aid him with his advice. At the commencement of the Bhagavad gita the two contending armies are supposed to be drawn up in battle-array, when Arjuna is struck with sudden compunction at the idea of fighting his way to a kingdom through the blood of his kindred, and asks Krishna's opinion as to his

proper course of action Krishna's reply is made the occasion of the long philosophical dialogue, commonly called 'the Song of the Adorable One' supposed to contain the actual utterances of the god, and venerated as one of the most sacred portions of Indian literature, as it certainly is one of the most beautiful. Undoubtedly the main design of the poem, the sentiments expressed in which have exerted a powerful influence throughout India for the last 1600 years, is to inculcate the doctrine of *Blattu*, to exalt the duties of caste above all other obligations, including those of friendship and kindred. As Arjuna belongs to the military caste, he is exhorted to perform his appointed work as a soldier. Again and again is he urged to fight without the least thought about consequences and without the slightest question as to the propriety of slaughtering his relations. Hence we have the following sentiments often repeated (III 35, VIII 47, 48)

Better to do the duty of one's caste
Though bad and ill performed and fraught with evil
Than undertake the business of another,
However good it be. For better far
Abandon life at once than not fulfil
One's own appointed work. Another's duty
Brings danger to the man who meddles with it.
Perfect one is alone attained by him
Who swerves not from the business of his caste.

The poem is divided into three sections each containing six chapters, the philosophical teaching in each section being somewhat distinct.

The first section dwells chiefly on the benefits of the Yoga system, pointing out however that the asceticism and self mortification of the Yoga ought to be joined with action and the performance of caste duties and winding up with a declaration that the grand aim of all self suppression is to attain that

most desirable state which enables a man to annihilate his own individuality, and see God in everything and everything in God. Arjuna is comforted under the distressing thought that he is about to kill his relations, by an argument drawn from the eternal existence of the soul, which is nobly expressed thus

"The wise grieve not for the departed, nor for those who yet survive. Never was the time when I was not, nor thou, nor yonder chiefs; and never shall be the time when all of us shall not be, as the embodied soul in this corporeal frame moves swiftly on through boyhood, youth, and age, so will it pass through other forms hereafter—be not grieved thereat. The man whom pain and pleasure, heat and cold affect not, he is fit for immortality. Whatever is not cannot be, whatever is can never cease to be. Know this—the Being that spread this universe is indestructible. Who can destroy the Indestructible? These bodies that enclose the everlasting soul, inscrutable, immortal, have an end, but he who thinks the soul can be destroyed, and he who deems it a destroyer, are alike mistaken, it kills not, and is not killed, it is not born, nor doth it ever die, it has no past nor future—unproduced unchanging, infinite, he who knows it fixed, unborn, imperishable, indissoluble, how can that man destroy another, or extinguish ought below? As men abandon old and threadbare clothes to put on others new, so casts the embodied soul its worn out frame to enter other forms. No dart can pierce it, flame cannot consume it, water wet it not, nor scorching breezes dry it—indestructible, incapable of heat or moisture or aridity eternal, all pervading, steadfast, immovable perpetual yet imperceptible, incomprehensible, unfading deathless, unimaginable."

In the second and sixth chapters the duty of Yoga or 'intense concentration of the mind on one subject' (viz. the Supreme Being here identified with Krishna), till at last the great end of freedom from all thought, perfect calm, and absorption in the Deity are obtained, is enjoined with much force of language, as may be seen from the following extracts

That holy man who stands immovable,
As if erect upon a pinnacle,¹

¹ *As it stha* (VI 8) may mean 'standing erect like a peak'

His appetites and organs all subdued,
 Sated with knowledge secular and sacred
 To whom a lump of earth, a stone, or gold,
 To whom friends, relatives, acquaintances,
 Neutrals and enemies the good and bad,
 Are all alike, is called 'one yoked with God'¹
 The man who aims at that supreme condition
 Of perfect yoking² with the Deity
 Must first of all be moderate in all things³
 In food, in sleep, in vigilance, in action,
 In exercise and recreation Then
 Let him, if seeking God by deep abstraction,
 Abandon his possessions and his hopes,
 Betake himself to some secluded spot,⁴
 And fix his heart and thoughts on God alone
 There let him choose a seat, not high nor low,
 And with a cloth or skin to cover him,
 And kusa grass beneath him, let him sit
 Firm and erect, his body, head, and neck
 Straight and immovable, his eyes directed
 Towards a single point,⁵ not looking round
 Devoid of passion, free from anxious thought,
 His heart restrained, and deep in meditation.
 Even as a tortoise draws its head and feet
 Within its shell so must he keep his organs
 Withdrawn from sensual objects He whose senses
 Are well controlled attains to sacred knowledge,
 And thence obtains tranquillity of thought
 Without quiescence there can be no bliss.
 Even as a storm tossed ship upon the waves,
 So is the man whose heart obeys his passions
 Which, like the winds, will hurry him away
 Quiescence is the state of the Supreme
 He who, intent on meditation, joins

¹ Tersely expressed in Sanskrit by *samī jorhī tana Līncana* (VI 8)

² I use these expressions as kindred words to the Sanskrit *yukta* and *yoga* 'Joined' and 'junction' are also cognate expressions.

³ Cf. Mat. vi 6 'But thou, when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.'

⁴ The text (VI 13) says, 'fixing his eyes on the tip of his nose' (*a mprek hṛt śāṅkhagṛām*)

His soul with the Supreme, is like a flame
That flickers not when sheltered from the wind

In the second division of this poem the pantheistic doctrines of the Vedanta are more directly inculcated than in the other sections. Krishna here, in the plainest language, claims adoration as one with the great universal spirit, pervading and constituting the universe.

The following are portions from different parts of this section

Whate'er thou dost perform, whate'er thou eatest,
Whate'er thou givest to the poor, whate'er
Thou offerest in sacrifice, whate'er
Thou doest as an act of holy penance
Do all as if to me, O Arjuna (IX. 27) ¹
I am the ancient Sage, without beginning,
I am the ruler and the All sustainer,
I am incomprehensible in form,
More subtle and minute than subtlest atom;
I am the cause of the whole universe,

¹ Compare 1 Cor. x. 31: 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Dr Lonnser, expanding the views of Professor Weber and others concerning the influence of Christianity on the legends of Krishna, thinks that many of the sentiments of the Bhagavad Gita have been directly borrowed from the New Testament, copies of which, he thinks, found their way into India about the third century, when he believes the poem to have been written. He even adopts the theory of a parallel in the names of Christ and Krishna. He does not, however, sufficiently bear in mind that fragments of truth are to be found in all religious systems, how ever false, and that the Bible, though a true revelation, is still, in regard to the human mind, through which the thoughts are transfused, a thoroughly Oriental book, cast in an Oriental mould, and full of Oriental ideas and expressions. Some of his comparisons seem mere coincidences of language, which might occur independently. Nevertheless, something may be said for Dr Lonnser's theory. His German translation (1869) is rich in notes, pointing out parallels. See also the 'Ind in Antiquary' for October, 1873.

Have faith in me, adore and worship me,¹
 And join thyself in meditation to me,
 Thus shalt thou come to me, O Arjuna,
 Thus shalt thou rise to my supreme abode,
 Where neither sun nor moon hath need to shine,
 For know that all the lustre they possess is mine.²

We come now to Chapter XI, called 'the Vision (or Revelation) of the Universal Form' (*uśta rūpa darśana*). Arjuna, filled with awe at the discovery of the true nature of Krishna, acting as his charioteer, addresses him thus

Most mighty Lord supreme, this revelation
 Of thy mysterious essence and thy oneness
 With the eternal Spirit, clears away
 The mists of my illusions. Show me then
 Thy form celestial, most divine of men,
 If haply I may dare to look upon it.

To this Krishna replies.

Thou canst not bear to gaze upon my shape
 With these thy human eyes, O son of Pandu
 But now I gift thee with celestial vision,
 Behold me in a hundred thousand forms,
 In phases, colours, fashions infinite

Then follows the description of Krishna's supernatural transformation.³

thee'. A sense of original corruption seems to be felt by all classes of Hindus, as indicated by the following prayer used after the Gayatri by some Vaishnavas—

*Pāpa 'ham pāpa karmī 'ham pāpīnaḥ pāpa-sambhaviḥ,
 Tīrtaḥ mama, pundarikakṣa sarva pāpa hara Hara,*

¹ I am sinful, I commit sin, my nature is sinful, I am concerned in sin,

Save me, O thou lotus eyed Hari, the remover of sin.²

Cf Prov xiii 26 'My son, give me thine heart'

² Cf Rev xxi 23 'The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it'

³ The idea of this Dr. Lounsbury considers borrowed from the Gospel narrative of the transfiguration. It is certainly very in

Thus having said, the mighty Lord of all
 Displayed to Arjuna his form supreme,
 Endowed with countless mouths and countless eyes,
 With countless faces turned to every quarter,
 With countless marvellous appearances,
 With ornaments, and wreaths, and robes divine,
 With heavenly fragrance and celestial weapons.
 It was as if the firmament were filled,
 All in an instant with a thousand suns,
 Blazing with dazzling lustre, so beheld he
 The glories of the universe collected
 In the one person of the God of gods.¹

Arjuna with every hair on his body bristling with awe, bows his head at this vision, and folding his hands in reverence, gives utterance to a passionate outburst of enthusiastic adoration, which is here abridged

I see thee, mighty Lord of all, revealed
 In forms of infinite diversity
 I see thee like a mass of purest light,
 Flashing thy lustre everywhere around.
 I see thee crowned with splendour like the sun,
 Pervading earth and sky, immeasurable,
 Boundless, without beginning, middle, end,
 Preserver of imperishable law,
 The everlasting Man,² the triple world
 Is awe-struck at this vision of thy form,
 Stupendous, indescribable in glory
 Have mercy, God of gods, the universe
 Is fully dazzled by thy majesty,
 Filly to thee alone devotes its homage

structive to contrast the simplicity of the Gospel scene. 'His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light' (Mat. xvii. 2, Mark ix. 3)

¹ In the Udyoga parvan of the Mahabharata (4419-4430) Krishna reveals his form in the same way to the assembled princes, who are obliged to close their eyes at the awful sight, while the blind Dhritrashtra is gifted with divine vision that he may behold the glorious spectacle (4437).

² San'atana dharma 4 (VI. 13) may be translated 'the eternal Spirit.'

At thy approach the evil demons flee,
 Scattered in terror to the winds of heaven.
 The multitude of holy saints¹ adore thee—
 Thee, first Creator² lord of all the gods,
 The ancient One³ supreme kece,acle
 Of all that is and is not, knowing all,
 And to be known by all. Immensely vast,
 Thou comprehendest all thou art the All (XI 40).
 To thee earth's greatest heroes must return,
 Blending once more with thy resplendent essence,
 Like mighty rivers rushing to the ocean (XI 28)
 To thee be sung a thousand hymns of praise
 By every creature and from every quarter,
 Before, above, behind. Hail! Hail! thou All!
 Again and yet again I worship thee
 Have mercy, I implore thee, and forgive,
 That I, in ignorance of this thy glory,
 Presumed to call thee Friend, and pardon too
 Whatever I have too negligently uttered,
 Addressing thee in too familiar tones
 Unrivalled God of gods I fall before thee
 Prostrate in adoration thou the Father
 Of all that lives and lives not, have compassion,
 Bear with me, as a father with a son,
 Or, as a lover with a cherished one
 No v that I see thee as thou really art,
 I thrill with terror! Mercy! Lord of lords,
 Once more display to me thy human form,
 Thou habitation of the universe⁴

Many other remarkable passages might be adduced in connection with the first two divisions of the sub

¹ Cf parts of the Te Deum. The Siddhas form a group (*gana*) of semi-divine beings, supposed to possess great purity, called Sādhyas in the earlier mythology (Manu i 22). Siddhas and Sādhyas are sometimes confused, though here mentioned separately (see p. 167)

² Cf John viii 58. 'Before Abraham was, I am'

³ *Purusha śa puruṣaḥ* 'the most ancient person' (XI 38). Cf Daniel vii 9. 'The Ancient of days did sit'

⁴ XI 45, 46. Dr Lonnser compares the awe of our Lord's disciples (Matt. xvii 6). 'They fell on their face and were sore afraid'. Also of Simon Peter (Luke v 8). 'When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord'

ject matter of the Bhagavad-gita The following may be noted

He who has brought his members under subjection but sits with foolish mind thinking in his heart of sensual things is called a hypocrite (III 6 Cf Matt v 28)

Many are my births that are past, many are thine too O Arjuna. I know them all, but thou knowest them not (IV 5 Cf John viii 14)

I for the establishment of righteousness am I born from time to time (IV 8 Cf John xviii 37 ; 1 John iii 3)

I am dearer to the wise than all possessions, and I e is dear to me (VI 17 Cf Luke xiv 33, John xiv 21)

The ignorant the unbeliever and he of a doubting mind perish utterly (IV 40 Cf Mark xvi 16)

In I m are all beings by him this universe was spread out (VIII 22 Cf Acts xvi 28)

Deluded men despise me when I have taken human form (IX 11 Cf John i 10)

In all the Vedas I am to be known (XV 15 Cf John i 32)

As many uses as there are in a reservoir filled with waters coming from all parts (for bathing washing or drinking) so many does a knowing Brāhman find in all the Vedas (II 46)

Subjoined is a paraphrase of another remarkable passage of the Bhagavad gītā (XVI. 12-16) It may be compared with Luke xii 17-20.

Entangled in a hundred worldly snares,
Self seeking men, by ignorance deluded,
Strive by unrighteous means to pile up riches.
Then, in their self complacency, they say,
' This acquisition I have made to-day,
That I will gain to-morrow ; so much self
Is hoarded up already, so much more
Remains that I have yet to treasure up.
This enemy I have destroyed, him also,
And others in their turn I will dispatch.
I am a lord ; I will enjoy myself ;
I'm wealthy, noble, strong, successful, happy ;
I'm absolutely perfect ; no one else
In all the world can be compared to me
Now I will offer up a sacrifice,
Give gifts with Jewish hand and be triumphant,'
Such men, beset by endless, vain conceits,
Caught in the meshes of the world's illusion,
Immersed in sensuality, descend
Down to the foulest hell of unclean spirits.

A few lines from Chapter III. may be added, in which Krishna exhorts Arjuna to energetic action by an argument drawn from the example set by himself in his own everlasting exertions for the good of the world (cf. John v 17). The order of the text is not observed in the following version, and the sentiment in lines 6, 7, is from Chapter II. 47 :

All acts already, nought remains for me
 To gain by action yet I work for ever
 Unweariedly and this whole universe
 Would perish if I did not work my work (III 19)

The third division of the poem, comprising the last six chapters, aims particularly at interweaving Sankhya doctrines with the Vedānta, though this is done more or less throughout the whole work. It accepts the doctrine of a supreme presiding spirit, as the first source of the universe, and asserts that both Prakṛiti and Puruṣa—that is, the original eternal element and soul—both emanate from this Supreme Being. Moreover, it maintains the individuality of souls, and affirms that the body and all the world of sense is evolved out of Prakṛiti by the regular Sankhyan process, through Buddhi, Ahaṁkāra, the five subtle elements, the five grosser elements, and the eleven organs, including mind.

Thus in XIII 19, and in VII 4-6, we read

Learn that *Prakṛiti* and *Puruṣa* also are both of them without beginning. And know that the *Vikaras* or 'productions,' and the *Guṇas* are sprung from *Prakṛiti*.

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, and egoism, into these eight is my *Prakṛiti* divided. This *Prakṛiti* is the inferior one, but learn my superior *Prakṛiti* to be other than this. Understand that all things are produced from this other *Prakṛiti*.

Again, in VII 12-14, Krishna, speaking of the three *Guṇas*, says

Know that all the three *Guṇas*, whether *Sattva*, *Rajas*, or *Tamas*, proceed only from me. I am not in them, but they in me.

All this universe, deluded by these three conditions consisting of the *Guṇas*, does not recognise me, the imperishable Being, superior to them all.

For this divine illusion (*Māyā*, i.e. 'illusory creation'), consisting of the three *Guṇas* caused by me, is difficult to be passed over. Those only are delivered from it who have recourse to me.

The eclecticism of the Bhagavad-gītā will be suffi

ciently apparent from these examples. Three or four passages (taken from Chapter III 27, Chapter XIII 29, 31) will form a fit conclusion to the subject, as they contain the gist of the whole argument, viz that it is Arjuna's duty, as a soldier, to act like a soldier, and to do the work of his caste, regardless of consequences; and that this may be done consistently with adhesion to the Vedantic dogma of the soul's real inactivity and state of passionless repose

All actions are incessantly performed
By operation of the qualities
Of *Prakṛti*, deluded by the thought
Of individuality, the soul
Vainly believes itself to be the doer.
The soul existing from eternity,
Devoid of qualities impershable,
Abiding in the body, yet supreme,
Acts not nor is by any act polluted
He who perceives that actions are performed
By *Prakṛti* alone, and that the soul
Is not an actor, sees the truth aright

Krishna's last advice may be thus summed up.

Act then and do thine own appointed task,
In every action my assistance ask,
Do all with heart and soul absorbed in me
So shalt thou gain thine end and be from trouble free

Arjuna's conclusion may be thus paraphrased

Eternal One! thy glory just beheld
Has all illusion from my soul dispelled,
Now by thy favour is my conscience clear,
I will thy bidding do and fight without a fear

This beautiful poem offers, as we have seen, numerous parallels to passages in our own sacred Scriptures. But if we examine the writings and recorded sayings of three great Roman philosophers Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, we shall find them also full of similar resemblances, while there

appears to be no ground whatever for supposing that these eminent Pagan writers and thinkers derived any of their ideas from either Jewish or Christian sources.

The fact is that we have not sufficient data for determining how far the presence of corrupt forms of Christianity in particular districts of India from early times, has affected Hinduism. The Hindū system is like a vast ocean which has received an infinite number of streams, and all we can say is that into some of these streams Christian tributaries, from turbid springs, which have afterwards dried up, may possibly have found their way and become absorbed.¹

Jainism

Jainism is the only representative of Buddhistic ideas now left in India, and has so much in common with them that, having already glanced at the chief features of Buddhism (see Chapter VI), we need only notice a few of the distinctive traits of a system which is certainly the near relation of Buddhism, if not its actual descendant.

The Jainas, who are still found in great numbers in various parts of India (especially on the western coast), are divided into two principal sects — 1. The Śvetāmbaras, 'clothed in white garments', 2. the Digāmbaras, 'sky-clad,' or 'naked', this distinction however, is now only observed in the images. These sects, though their doctrines rest on nearly the same sacred books, called collectively Agamas, and classed under the head of Angas, Upangas, &c.,² differ in

¹ M. de Thevenot who visited Agra in 1666 wrote that 'some affirm that there are 25 000 Christian families in Agra.' In all probability, Shah Jahān employed only Europeans for his arsenals artillery &c. See Sleeman's Pambles vol. ii p. 49.

² The Jainas of the Śvetāmbara Jainas are comprised

some few matters, such as the mark of clothing or absence of such mark on their images, the number of heavens, &c. They both agree with the Buddhists in rejecting the Veda of the Brahmans. The principal point in the Jainæ creed is the reverence paid to holy men, who, by long discipline, have raised themselves to divine perfection. The Jina, or 'conquering saint, who has conquered all worldly desires' (whence the adjective Jina, to denote a follower of the Jinæ), is with Jainæ what the Buddha, or 'perfectly enlightened saint,' is with Buddhæ. He is also called Jineśvara, 'chief of the Jinæ', Arhat, 'the venerable', Tirthanâra, 'the saint who has made the passage of the world', Sarva-jna, 'omniscient', Bhagavat, 'holy one'. Time with Jainæ proceeds in two eternally recurring cycles of immense duration, defying all human calculation. 1. the Utsarpiṇi or 'ascending cycle', 2. Avasarpiṇi or descending cycle. Each of these had six stages. Those of the Utsarpiṇi period are bad bad, bad, bad good, good bad, good, good good time. In the Avasarpiṇi period, the series begins with good good and goes regularly backwards. In the first cycle the age and stature of men increase, in the other decrease. We are now

in forty five different works, in six groups collectively called Agamas, viz 1. eleven *Angas*, 2. twelve *Upaṅgas*, 3. ten *Paṇṇas*, 4. four *Mihira sūtra*, 5. six *Cheḥa sūtra*, 6. one *Bandi sūtra*, 7. one *Anuyoga dharma sūtra*. Some of them have a fourfold commentary, under the names *Tīkâ*, *Anvya kṛti*, *Āraṇ*, and *Bhāṣya*. The *Tīkâs* are in Sanskrit, the others in Māgadhî Prakṛit. Professor Dr. A. Weber has recently given a long account of these works in his *Indische Studien*. I should add that the sacred books of the Digambara Jainæ are in Sanskrit and little known to Europeans. Two Digambara Jainæ who visited me at Jaypur spoke Sanskrit fluently, and wore the Brahmanical thread. They did not deny that they considered themselves half Brahmans.

in the fifth stage of the *Avasarpini*, & *c* in 'bad' time. When the two cycles have run out, a Yuga or age is accomplished. Twenty four Jinas, or 'perfect saints,' raised to the rank of gods, have appeared in the present *Avasarpini* cycle, twenty four in the past *Utsarpini*, and twenty four will appear in the future. The idols representing them are always, like that of Buddha, in a contemplative posture. The first Jina of the present cycle lived 8,400,000 years, and attained a stature equal to the length of 500 bows (*dhanus*). The age and stature of the second were somewhat less, and so in a descending scale. The last two Jinas, *Pārśva natha* and *Mahāvira* were probably real persons, and are those principally revered by the Jains of the present day. In all likelihood the first founder of the sect was *Pārśva natha*, and its first active propagator *Mahāvira*. In the same cycle there have lived twelve 'Cakra vartins,' 'universal emperors,' nine divine personages called *Bala-devas*, nine called *Vasudevas*, and nine others called *Prativasudevas*, making a list of sixty three divine persons in all.

With regard to the world, the Jains affirm that, being formed of eternal atoms, it has existed and will exist eternally. They believe that it has three divisions, viz. lower, middle, and upper, and that there are numerous hells and heavens. All existing things are arranged under the two great *Tattvas* of *Jiva*, 'living soul,' and *Ajiva*, 'inanimate objects.' Of living souls there are three kinds: *a Nitya siddha*, 'ever perfect,' as the Jina, *b Mukti man*, 'liberated soul', *c Baddhatman*, 'bound soul,' or one bound by works and worldly associations. Material objects are sometimes classed under a *Tattva* called *Pudgala*, and some make seven, others nine *Tattvas*.

There are three 'gems,' which together effect the soul's liberation (*moksha*), viz. *a* right intuition, *b* right knowledge, *c* right conduct. This last consists

in observing five duties or vows of self-restraint, thus

1. Do not kill or injure. Strict Jains carry this to so preposterous an extreme that they strain water before drinking it, sweep the ground with a brush before treading on it, never eat or drink in the dark, and sometimes wear muslin before the mouth to prevent the risk of swallowing minute insects. Moreover, they never eat figs or any fruit containing seed, nor will they even touch flesh meat with their hands. 2. Do not tell lies. 3. Steal not. 4. Be chaste and temperate in thought, word, and deed. 5. Desire nothing immoderately.

There are two classes of Jains, as of Buddhists, viz. *Śrāvakas*, those who engage in secular occupations, and *Jātin*, monks or ascetics, who are required to pluck out their hair or wear it cropped short. The latter often congregate in *Mithras* or 'monasteries,' being called *Siddhi* when not monastic.

It should be noted that most Jains have a sort of modified belief in the Hindū gods, especially Brahmā, Vishnu, Śiva, and Gaṇeśa, with their consorts, as beings subordinated to the Jains, and representations of these deities are sometimes observable in the precincts of their temples. They are even observers of caste practices, and claim to be regarded as Hindūs, though rejecting the Hindu Veda. In many parts of India the priests of Jain temples are Brāhmins.

The Ārvākas

There is no such philosophical sect as that of the Ārvākas at present in India, but that a materialistic school of thinkers so called once existed, and exercised no slight influence on sceptical philosophy, is proved by the frequent allusions to them in Indian writings. No account of Hinduism, therefore, would be complete without a brief statement of their opinions.

Nothing is known about Ārvāka, the founder of

this materialistic school. He may be styled the Indian Pyrrho or Epicurus and his system is the worst form of all heresies. On that account, perhaps, it was honoured with the first place in Mādhavācārya's compendium of all the philosophical systems, called *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*. In the *Śānti-parvan* of the *Māhābhārata* (1410 &c.) there is a story of a Rākṣhaṣa named Carvaka, who, in the disguise of a mendicant Brahman, reviled Yudhiṣṭhira during his triumphant entry into Hastinapura, and uttered profane and heretical doctrines. He was, however, soon detected, and the real Brahmins filled with fury, killed him on the spot. This legend may possibly rest on some basis of fact.

The creed of the Carvakas, who are sometimes called Lokayatas or Lokayatikas,¹ is said to have been derived from the Vārihaspatya Sūtras (Aphorisms of Vrihaspati). They reject all the Pramanas, or 'sources of true knowledge,' except Pratyakṣa, 'perception by the senses' (see p. 185), they admit only four Tattvas or 'eternal principles,' viz. earth, air, fire and water, and from these intelligence (*cintana*) is alleged to be produced, they affirm that the soul is not different from the body, and, lastly, they assert that all the phenomena of the world are spontaneously produced, without even the help of Adṛiṣṭa (see p. 51). Their views may be summed up with a version of a passage in the *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha* setting forth their opinions according to the supposed teaching of Vrihaspati. The sentiments, it will be perceived, are worthy of the most sceptical, materialistic, and epicurean of European writers.

No heaven exists, no final liberation
No soul, no other world, no rights of caste,

¹ By some this name is given to a subdivision of the Carvakas or the materialistic school.

No recompense for acts, the Agnihotra,
 The triple Veda, triple self command,¹
 And all the dust and ashes of repentance—
 These yield a means of livelihood for men
 Devoid of intellect and manliness
 If victims slaughtered at a sacrifice
 Are raised to heavenly mansions,² why should not
 The sacrificer immolate his father?
 If offerings of food can satisfy³
 Hungry departed spirits, why supply
 The man who goes a journey with provisions?
 His friends at home can feed him with oblations.
 If those abiding in celestial spheres
 Are filled with food presented upon earth,
 Why should not those who live in upper stones
 Be nourished by a meal spread out below?
 While life enlures, let life be spent in ease
 And merriment,⁴ let a man borrow money
 From all his friends and feast on melted butter
 How can this body when reduced to dust
 Evert earth? and if a ghost can pass
 To other worlds, why does not strong affection
 For those he leaves behind attract him back?
 The costly rites enjoined for those who die
 Are a mere means of livelihood devised
 By sacerdotal cunning—nothing more.
 The three composers of the triple Veda
 Were rogues, or evil spirits, or buffoons.
 The recitation of mysterious words
 And jabber⁵ of the priests is simple nonsense.

¹ *Tri-danda*, 'control over thoughts, words, and actions, denoted by the three Dandas or staves carried by ascetics.' See Manu, VII 10, 11

² See Manu, V 42, and p 38 of this volume. Cf. Mahābhārata, Aśvamedhika parvan 793 &c.

³ This is a hit at the Śrāddha, when (as we have explained at p 66) oblations of cakes and libations of water are made to the spirits of deceased fathers, grandfathers, and progenitors.

⁴ 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die' (1 Cor. xv 32). Compare such Horatian precepts as *Epod.* III 3, &c.

⁵ Two curious Vedic words *jardhārī* and *turphāri*, are given in the text as specimens of what I suppose modern scoffers might call 'Vedic slang'. They occur in Rig-veda A 106, 6, and

As a conclusion to our Appendix, we commend the foregoing curious commentary on the religious system of the Hindus by an enemy within their own camp, to the special attention of the Christian Missionary in India. The satirical spirit it evinces is very different from that we have recommended, at the end of our 12th chapter, as likely to be most effective in contending with the Hydra Hinduism

Nirukta XIII 5 For their explanation, see Bohtlingk and Roth and my Sanskrit English Dictionary (published by Macmillan & Co for the University of Oxford)

PRONUNCIATION OF LETTERS IN WORDS OF SANSKRIT ORIGIN

VOWELS.

a	as in	rural	ॠ	as in	merrily
ā	"	tar, father	ॡ	"	marine
i	"	fill	ॢ	"	prey
ī	"	police	ॣ	"	aisle.
u	ॡ	full	।	"	go
ū	"	rude	॥	"	Haus (German).

CONSONANTS

k	as in	kill, seek.
kḥ	"	in kḥorn.
g	"	gun, dog
gh	"	log hut
ṅ	before k or g, as in	sink, sing
ṅ	as cḥ in	church (cure)
ṅḥ	as cḥḥ in	church/hill
j	as in	jet
jḥ	as dḥḥ in	hedḥḥog (hej/hog)
ñ	before c and j, as in	lich, singe
ṣ	as in	true
ṣḥ	"	ant/hill
ḍ	"	drum.
ḍḥ	"	re thaired.
ṇ	"	none
ṭ	"	water (in Ireland)
ṭḥ	"	nut hook (but more dental)
ḍ	"	dice (more like ṭḥ in this)
ḍḥ	"	adhere (but more dental)
ṁ	"	not, in
ṡ	"	put up
ṡḥ	"	up/hill
b	"	bear, rub
ḷḥ	"	ad/lor
m	"	map, jam
y	"	yet
r	"	red, year
ḷ	"	lie
v	"	vie (like w after consonants)
ṣ	"	sure, session
ṣḥ	"	stun, hurt
ṣ	"	st, huss
ḥ	"	hit
ḥ	as Varga, or a distinctly audible aspirate	

- Avayavas (members of a syllogism), 188, 189
 Avidya, 205
 Avyakta, 195
 Awadhi dialect, 7
 Ayodhya, 110 177
 Ayodhya kanda 110
 Ayogava, a mixed caste, 57, 153

 BĀDARAYANA, 26, 203
 Badari kedara, or Badari nāth, 178
 Bahais (carpenters), 163
 Baladevas 223
 Bala kanda, 110
 Bal, 63 (n. 2)
 Bandarwars, 162
 Bangs (sweepers), 164
 Banias, or Banyas, 162
 Banjaras, 162
 Banyan tree, 171
 Benares, 174 175, 177
 Bengali language, 7
 Bhagavad gita, 200-221
 Bhagavata purana, 118, 119, 120
 Bhairava (Śiva) 94.
 Bhairava natha, 166.
 Bhairavi, 95
 Bhāktas, 136.
 Bhakti, 115 136, 208, 209 &
 Bhakti marga, 12
 Bhakti śāstra, 15
 Bhakti sūtras, 116
 Bhārata, 1
 Bhārata khanda, 1
 Bhārata varsha, 1
 Bhāskarācārya, 139.
 Bhatiyas, 162.
 Bhats, 163
 Bhatta prayaga, 177
 Bhava bhuti, 111
 Bhavānī (a shrine), 179.
 Bhavishya purana, 118
 Bhikshu 'a religious devotee,' 59, (Buddhist) 78.
 Bhīma, 112.
 Bhūma sankara 178
 Bhishma parvan 113
 Bhustis (water carriers), 164.
 Bhojpuri dialect, 7
 Bhur, 61
 Bhuta śuddhi, 132
 Bhuta yajna, 63
 Bhuvār, 61
 Bihustis (water carriers) 164.
 Bindu (a Sarovar) 179
 Bodhi tree, 75
 Brahma See Brahman
 Brāhma (the god), 26 87-90
 Brahma form of marriage, 62.
 Brahma śārin, 'unmarried student,' 59
 Brahma jijnasa, 204.
 Brahman 17, 204, the supreme soul, 49, meaning of, 86
 Brahman's portion of the Veda, 14, 18 33-38
 Brahmanda purāṇa, 118.
 Brahmanism, 13, Buddism and Brahmanism contrasted, 74
 Brahmans (priests), 34, 56 63, divisions of, 159
 Brahma purāṇa, 118
 Brahma Samaj 149
 Brahma yajna, 63
 Brahma vaivarta purāṇa, 118.
 Braj dialect, 7
 Buddha, 72, 74, 75, meaning of, 74, incarnation of Vishnu, 103
 Buddha (intellect) 196
 Buddhādnyana, 196 (n)
 Buddhism, 72, and Brahmanism contrasted, 74.

 'CAITANYA, 146.
 Caitanyas, 138, 146, 147.
 'Cakra varman, 54, 223.
 Camāris (leather-cutters), 164
 Cāmundā, 124
 Cāpakya, 72 (n)
 Candalas a mixed caste, 57, 153

- 'Candi, 124
 Candi mahatmya, 119
 'Candra Sen (Keshab), 149
 Candragupta, 4, 73 74
 Carvakas, 224.
 Caste, 151-159
 Castes (the four), 56 57, 152,
 (modern divisions), 159, (ori-
 gin of mixed castes), 152, 153.
 Categories (seven), 190, 191.
 Caturvarnya, 56.
 Caula, 59
 Ceylon 82 111
 'Chandas, 15
 Citra kote 179
 Confluences (seven), 177, 178
 Confucius 47
 Conjevaram, 177
 Cows, reverence for, 169
 Cuda karman, 59
 Custard apple, 171

 DARPA form of marriage, 62
 Dakore 180.
 Dakshinacarin, 126
 Dandakaranya (the Deccan), 166
 Danda pani, 166
 Darśanas (systems of philosophy),
 14, 46 187 206.
 Dasahara, 183
 Dasaratha, 110.
 Dasra 24
 Deccan, 166
 Deva prayaga, 178
 Deva yajna, 63
 Devi mahatmya, 118.
 Devi 123
 Dhurjati, 93.
 Dharma (caste duties), 77, 207,
 208
 Dharma śāstra, 15
 Dhigvāna, a mixed caste, 57
 Dhobis (washermen) 164.
 Dhṛita rāṣṭra, 112.
 Diet, 64.
 Digambara, 93 221

 Dipali or Divali, 184.
 Dirzis (tailors) 164.
 Dola yatra, 182
 Doms (chair makers), 164
 Dravida Brahmans, 159
 Dravidians 2, language of, 8, 9.
 Dravya (substance) 190, 191
 Drishadvati river, 55
 Drishtanta (example in logic),
 189
 Drona parvan 113
 Durba grass, 171
 Durga, 95 124
 Durga puja, 183
 Duryodhana, 112
 Dvapara age, 121
 Dvarakā, 114, 177, 178
 Dvi ja, 'twice born,' 58
 Dyaus, 22, 24.
 Dyaush pitar, 22.

 EATING and drinking, 155-157.

 FOOD, 155-157

 GADHADA, 180
 Gandharva form of marriage,
 62
 Garbha, 63 165
 Ganesh caturthi 183
 Gangā pūtra, 160
 Ganga sagara, 173 178
 Ganges, 172
 Gangotri, 173 178
 Garbhadana, 59
 Garbha lambhana 59.
 Garuda purana 118.
 Gauda Brāhmins, 159.
 Gauri 124
 Gautama, 75
 Gaya, 75 176.
 Gayatri, 61
 Gaya wāl 160.
 Gī fishpessera 179
 Gita go-vinda, 139.

Godāvari river, 173
 Gods (thirty-three), 25.
 Gond language, 9
 Gosāin, 144.
 Gosāinjī, 143
 Gotama, 46, 75, 189
 Gotras, 160.
 Grabas (nine planets), 180
 Griha stha, 'householder,' 59.
 Grihya sūtra, 75, 53
 Gujarati language, 8.
 Guna (quality), 190, 191.
 Gunas (three), 88, 194, 195.
 Gurjara Brāhmins, 159.

HAJJAMS (barbers), 164.
 Halwāis (confectioners), 164.
 Hanumān, 166.
 Hari-dwār 177.
 Harivānda-, urvan, 114
 Hell, 51.
 Hetu (reason in logic), 188.
 Hindi language, 7.
 Hīndū, origin of name, 2.
 Hindūism, 13, 16.
 Hindūstān, 1.
 Hindūstāni language, 7.
 Hsuen Tshang, 81.
 Hiraṇya garbha, 198. (C
 Holi festival, 182.

IDOL-WORSHIP, 165
 Incarnations, 103; Viṣṇu's ten,
 104-108
 India, different names of, 1, 2 ;
 population of, 2, immigra-
 tions into, 2-6 ; conquests of,
 4 ; fourteen languages of, 7-
 9 ; sacred language of, 13
 Indra, 23, 167
 Indrapī, 27
 Indus river, 2
 Investiture with the cord, 60, 61.
 Isvara, 205
 Juhāsa, 15, 111.

JAGAN NĀTH, 175, 178
 Jagin māṭri, 93, 95.
 Jaimini, 46, 201.
 Jaina, 222.
 Jainism, 221-224.
 Jambū-dvīpa, 2.
 Jangamas, 148.
 Janmāshtami, 183.
 Jāta karman, 59
 Jats, or Jāts, 164.
 Jaya-deva, 139
 Jina, 222.
 Jīvātman, the individual soul,
 50, 192, 200, 206.
 Jāina mārga, 11.
 Jumnā river, 172.
 Jumnōtri, 178.
 Jvālā mukhī, 179.
 Jyotir-mattha, 179.
 Jyotisha, 15.
 Jyotishī (family astrologer), 62.
 Jyotishtoma sacrifice, 40.

KABIR, 141, 142.
 Kahārs (palankin-bearers), 164.
 Kālā, 'Time,' 92.
 Kālāge, 121.
 Kālī (the goddess), 92, 95, 124.
 125
 Kalkī or Kalkin, incarnation of
 Viṣṇu, 108.
 Kalpa sūtra, 15
 Kāma (god of love), 167.
 Kāma dhenu, 169.
 Kāṇāda, 46, 190
 Kanarese language, 8.
 Kanari dialect, 7
 Kānci (Konjeveram), 177
 Kānyakubji Brāhmins, 159
 Kapila, 46, 193
 Kapilā vastu, 74
 Karāṇa, a mixed caste, 57
 Karma-mārga, 11
 Karman (act), 190, 191.
 Karma phala, 55.
 Karma-vipāka, 51.

- Karmendriyāni, 196
 Kārṇa parvan, 113
 Kārṇa prayāga, 178.
 Kārṇāta Brahmans, 159
 Kārṇa vedha, 60
 Karttika purnima, 184.
 Karttikeya, 166
 Kaseras (braziers), 163
 Kāśī (Benares), 177
 Kāśmīrī language, 8
 Kathaks (musicians), 163
 Kaulopanishad, 131.
 Kauravas, or Kuru princes, 112,
 113
 Kāveri river, 173
 Kāvya, 15
 Kaya-stha, a mixed caste, 57,
 163.
 Kedāra, or Kedaresvara, 178
 Kerala (Malabar), 137
 Keśanta, 59
 Ketu (the planet), 166
 Khatris, 162.
 Khond language, 9
 Kishkindhya kanda, 111.
 Kistna river, 173
 Kodagu language, 9.
 Kolarian language, 9
 Kolis (weavers), 163.
 Konkani dialect, 8
 Kōta language, 9
 Kṛishṇa, 208.
 „ (incarnation of Vishṇu),
 106.
 Kṛita age, 121
 Kshatriyas (soldiers), 35, 56, 57
 Kulis (coolies or labourers), 164
 Kumarika khaṇḍa, 1
 Kumbhars (potters), 164.
 Kurma incarnation, 105
 Kūrma purāṇa, 118
 Kuru princes, 112, 113.
 Kuru kshetṛ, 113, 179
 Kusā grass, 171
 Kuvera, 167
 LAKSHMI, 124
 Languages spoken in India, 7-9
 Lanka (Ceylon), 111
 Linga, 92, 93, 165
 Linga purāṇa, 118
 Linga-sarira, 65
 Lingavats, 148
 Lohars (blacksmiths), 163
 Lokayatas, or Lokayatikas, 225
 Lonaris (preparers of salt), 164
 MADHVAĀCĀRYA, 141
 Madhya, or Madhvaācārya, 141
 Madhvaācāryas, 138, 141
 Mahabalesvar, 178
 Maha bhārata, 15, 111-114
 „ -bhūtas (five), 196
 „ -brahmaṇa, 160
 Mahā deva, 123
 Maha devī, 123
 Mahakala, or Mahakalesvara,
 178.
 Maha lakshmi (a shrine), 179
 „ pātra, 160.
 „ rāshṭra Brahmans, 59
 Mahat, 196
 Mahātmyas, 175
 Maha vidyas (ten), 125
 „ -yajnas (five) 63
 Mahishya, a mixed caste, 57
 Maithila Brahmans, 159
 Makāras (five), 127
 Makara sankranti festival, 181
 Malabar, 137
 Malayalam language, 8
 Mālis (gardeners) 164.
 Mallahs (boatmen), 164.
 Mallikarjuna, 178.
 Manas, 196
 Manasa (a Sarovara), 179
 Mānavas, 53
 Mantra, 98.
 „ portion of the Veda, 14.
 18.
 Mantras, 127, 128
 Mann, code of, 53-67

- Manushya ज्ञान, 63
 Markandeya purana 118
 Marriage 155, eight forms of, 62
 Maruts (The) 23
 Matha (a monastery), 224
 Mathura (Muttra), 177
 Matris, or Matrikas, 124
 Matsya incarnation, 104
 Mausala parson, 114
 Maya (illusion) 195
 „ (Haridwar), 177
 Megasthenes, 4, 73
 Mela (religious fair), 182
 Mewari dialect, 7
 Mihtars (sweepers), 164
 Mimamsa system of philosophy, 46, 201-203
 Mitakshara, 70
 Mitra, 22
 Modis, 16
 Mohun Roy (Raja Ram), 149
 Monkeys, 170
 Mudra, 127, 130
 Muhammadans, 5, 6
 Murchhavasikta, a mixed caste, 57
 Muttira, 177

 NAGA NATH, or Nageswari 179
 Naga pančami, 183 C
 Nagas (serpents), 169
 Nakshatras (27 constellations), 180
 Nakula, 112
 Namā kirāpa, 59
 Nanak Shah, 142
 Nanda prayaga, 178
 Naradiya purana, 118
 Narayana, 101, (a Sarovara), 179
 Nara sinha incarnation, 106
 Narbada river, 173
 Nasaiya, 24
 Nasik, 179
 Nath dvar, 180
 Naus (barbers), 164
 Nava grahah (nine planets), 166
 Nava ratri festival, 183
 Nepali language, 10
 Nigamana (conclusion in logic), 188
 Nimbarka, or Nimbadiya, 138
 Nimbarkas, 138, 139
 Niraya (in logic), 189
 Nirukta, 15
 Nishkramya, 59
 Non Aryan races of India, 7
 Nyaya system of philosophy, 46, 187-190

 OJHA, 160
 Om (the mystical word), 87, 200
 Om kara, 178
 Oraon language, 9
 Oriya language, 8
 Oswals, 162

 PADARTHAS (seven categories), 190
 Padma purana, 118
 Paisaca form of marriage, 62
 Pakhtu language, 10
 Palitana 180
 Pampa (a Sarovara), 179
 Panca lakshana, 117
 Pandavas, or Pandu princes, 112
 Panchharpur, 120 (n), 147, 176
 Panjabi language, 8
 Parama hansas, 148
 Paramāitman, the Supreme Soul, 49, 192, 206
 Paramūas (six), 79
 Parāśa rama, 167, incarnation of, 106
 Parāśurāma kshetra, 167
 Parikrama, 173
 Parikshit 179
 Parivrajaka (a religious mendicant), 59, (Budd
 Parsas, 5

- Parvan, 181.
 Parvatī, 95
 Pashtu language, 10
 Pasu (village watchmen), 164.
 Pāsupatas, 148
 Paśu pati (Siva), 148
 Pātali putra (Patna), 4, 73.
 Patanjali, 46, 200.
 Philosophy, six systems of, 45,
 46, 187-206
 Pilgrimage, places of, 171-180;
 why undertaken, 171, 172
 Pipila, 66, 68.
 Pipal tree, 170.
 Putri yajna, 63
 Places (sacred), 170-180
 Planets (temples of the nine),
 166
 Pongol festival, 182.
 Prabhāsa, 179
 Pradakṣiṇā, 173
 Pradhāna, 195.
 Praja pati, 90.
 Prajapatiya form of marriage, 62
 Prakṛti, 194-199
 Pramā (true knowledge), 52,
 188, 197.
 Pramānas (four), 188; (three),
 197.
 Prameya, 189
 Pratijñā (logical proposition),
 188
 Prativāsudevas, 223
 Pratyakṣa, 188.
 Prayaga (Allahābād), 176, (2
 confluence), 177.
 Prayag wāl, 160.
 Prāyascitta, 55, 71
 Prayojana (in logic), 189
 Priests. See Brahmins.
 Prithivī, 24.
 Pukkasa, a mixed caste, 57.
 Punsavana, 59
 Purāṇa, 15, 115-122; subjects
 treated of in a, 117.
 Pūrbi dialect, 7.
 Puruṣa prajña, 140
 Puruṣa, the Supreme Soul, 49,
 195, 200.
 Puruṣa sūkta, 30.
 Pūrva mīmāṃsā, 201.
 Pūrva pakṣa, 202.
 Pushkara (a Sarovara), 179
 Pushti mārga, 144.
 Pythagoras, 47.
 RĀHU (the planet), 166
 Rāja pur, 180.
 Rajas (the Guna), 88, 117, 194,
 195.
 Rajasa Purāṇas, 117, 118
 Rajmahal language, 9
 Rākṣasa form of marriage, 62.
 Rākṣasas, 166
 Rām Mohun Roy, 149.
 Rāma (incarnation of Viṣṇu),
 106, 110.
 Rāma kṣetra (the Deccan),
 166
 Rāmānanda, 141
 Rāmānandas, 138, 141, 142
 Rāma nāth, or Ramesvara, 179
 Rāmānuja, 139
 Rāmānujas, 138, 140.
 Rāmāyana, 15, 109-111.
 Rāmeśvara, 178, 179
 Rangaris (dyers), 164.
 Rastogi, 162
 Rāvana, 2, 110, 111, 166
 Renukā (a shrine), 179
 Rig veda, 19
 Rishis, 17.
 Rivers, sacred, 172, 173.
 Rosaries, 61.
 Rudra, 92.
 Rudra prayāga, 178.
 Rudras, 25, 167
 Rudra yamala Tantra, 131.
 SĀBARMATI river, 173
 'Sabda (verbal authority), 188.
 Sabhā parvan, 112.

- Śacīdānanda, 52, 195, 204
 Sacrifices, human, 36, 37 of animals, 38-41, of the soma plant, 39, abolition of animal, 42
 Śad ācāra, 55
 Śādhyas, 167
 Sages (seven), 160
 Śahadeva, 118
 Śahajānanda, 145
 Śaiva, 97
 'Śaivism, 97-100
 'Śāktas, 95, 122-132
 Śakti, 92, 123, 199
 'Śaktism, 122-133
 'Śālagrāma stones, 1;
 Śālokya, 51
 Śalya parvan, 113
 Śamā (Brahma), 14
 Śamīnolakas, 63
 Śarānya (generality of properties), 190, 191
 Śamāvarṇana, 39, 62
 Śamavāya (coinherence), 191
 Śama veda, 20
 Śamayaśāstra sūtra, 15
 Śami tree, 171
 Śamipya, 51
 Śampradāyas, 135
 Śamsāya (in logic), 189
 Śandhyā, 63
 Śāṇḍilya, 116
 Śāndrokottus (= Candra gupta), 4, 72
 Śāṅkarācārya, 137, 203, 206
 Śāṅkhya system of philosophy, 46, 193-200
 Śannyāsīn (religious devotee), 59, 65
 Śanskāras (twelve), 59
 Śanskrit (language), 13, literature, 13, 14
 Śanti parvan, 113
 Śapīnī, 69
 Śaptapadi, 63
 'Śarada math, 179
 Śarasvata Brahmins, 159
 Śarasvatī (river) 355, 95, note 1, 172, (the goddess), 90, 124
 Śaryu river, 173
 Śarovara (divine lakes), 179
 Śārupya, 51
 Śiva-dāśanā sangraha, 225
 Śastra, 160
 Śati (Duttee), 149
 Śatruṅgya, 179
 Śattva (1st & Guṇa), 88, 117, 194, 195
 Śāstraka Purāṇas, 117, 118
 Śaṅkha parvan, 113
 Śayujya, 51, 52
 Sects (Hindu), 134, 135
 Seleukos Nikator, 4, 73
 'Śeṣa (the serpent), 170
 Śhip-dāśanīyus (six systems of philosophy), 46
 'Śikṣa, 15
 'Śikṣa patri, 146 (n)
 'Śiddhānta (in logic), 189
 Śiddhas, 167
 Śimāntonnayana, 59
 Sindhi language, 8
 Sindhu river, 1
 Sins (five great), 64
 'Sītālā (the goddess of small pox), 166
 'Siva, 26, 87-96, 98
 'Siva purāṇa, 118
 'Siva rātri, 182
 Sītā, 110, 111
 Skānda, 166
 Skānda purāṇa, 118
 Smārta sūtra, 15
 Smṛiti, 14
 Somnath, 178
 Sonars (goldsmiths), 163
 Soul, 49, 50
 Śrāddhas (funeral rites), 64-68
 Śramāṇas (Buddhist ascetics), 78
 Śrāuta sūtra, 15
 'Śravakas (Jaina), 224

- Sn nath, 180
 Snngen mṛtha, 179.
 Sn parṇam, 182.
 Sn vatsa mark, 120 (n).
 Srotriya Brahman, 160.
 Sṛuṭi, 14, 18
 Stones (sacred), 171
 Stri parvan, 113.
 'Sudra', 3, 56 57
 Sūndara kāvya, 111
 Surya, 24.
 Sutars (carpenters), 163.
 Sūtra, 34 (n), 46
 of Buddha, 77
 Svami narayana, 145.
 Sva paka, 153
 Svar, 61
 Svargarohan'ka parvan, 114
 'Svetambaras, 221
 Syllogism (logical), 183
- TAGORE, 149.
 Tallinga Brahmins, 159
 Takṣaka (the serpent), 170
 Tamas (the Gṛha), 88, 117, 194.
 195
 Tāmāsa Purāṇas, 117, 118.
 Tamil language, 8.
 Tanmatras (five) 196
 Tantis (weavers), 163.
 Tantra, 15
 Tantras, 122 137
 Tāntrism, 122 133
 Tāpī mūla, 178.
 Tāpī river, or Tāpī, 173
 Tarka (refutation in logic), 189.
 Tattva, 194.
 Tel's (oilmen), 164
 Telugu language, 8.
 Tilaka mark, 98.
 Tirhas, 171
 Ti hi (a lunar day) 181
 Tola language 9.
 Transmigration of souls, 42, 68
 Treṭa yuga, 121
- Tri mūrti (Vedic), 25, (later),
 87
 Tri pitaka, 77
 Tri pūrāṇa, 98
 Trvambaka nath, 178
 Trilama, 147, 176
 Tulsi plant, 170.
 Tulu language, 9.
 Turanian races, 2.
- UDĀHARANA (major premiss),
 188
 Udaṣa, 146.
 Udaṣi, 142.
 Udgatṛi priests, 20.
 Udyoga parvan, 112.
 Uma, 95, 124.
 Upamāna (comparison), 188.
 Upanaya (minor premiss), 188.
 Upanavāna, 59, 60
 Upanishad portion of the Veda,
 14, 18, 43-45.
 Upa purāṇa, 15, (eighteen),
 122.
 Upāsakas (Buddhist laymen), 78
 Urdhva pundra, 98
 Usha, 24.
 Utkala Prahmans, 159
 Utsarpari (ascending cycle) 222
 Uttara kanda, 111
 Uttara paksha, 20.
 Uttara mimāṃsa, 201
- VAIDĪKA Brahman 160.
 Vaidya (a medicine) 57 163.
 Vaidya nath 178.
 Vajapeya sacrifice 40.
 Vairagya 142, 148.
 Vaiseshika system of philosophy
 46, 190-193.
 Vaisnavya, 97
 Vaisnavism, 97
 Val abhacārya
 of, 143
 Valabhaśrīya
 of, 143
 Valabhaśrīya
 of, 143

- Vamaçarins, 126
 Vamana incarnation 106.
 Vamanā purāṇa, 118
 Vana parvan, 112
 Vānaprastha (anchorite), 59, 64.
 Varaha incarnation, 105
 Vāraha-purāṇa, 118.
 Vardhana matha, 179
 Varuṇa, 22, 23, 167
 Varuṇī, 27
 Vasudevas, 223
 Vāsukī (the serpent), 170
 Vasus (eight) 167
 Vayu, 23
 Vāyu purāṇa, 118.
 Veda, meaning of, 17
 Vedāṅgas (six), 15
 Vedānta system of philosophy, 46
 Veda, 19 20.
 Venā river 173
 Vijas 127, 128.
 Vijaya-dakṣiṇā, 183
 Vikāra (sixteen), 196
 Vihāra 170.
 Vinaya, 77
 Viṇaya parvan 112.
 Visesā (particularity) 190, 191
 Vishnu, the god, 87 91, 100-108.
 Vishṇu prayāga, 177
 Vishṇu purāṇa, 118, 120-122
 Viśva devas (ten) 167
 Viśva nath, 178
 Vithobā, 120, (n), 147 176.
 Vāṇī 59
 Vreṭta 23
 Vrishatha 148
 Vyāhritis (three) 61
 Vyākṛti (in logic) 188
 Vyākṛti (in logic) 188
 Vyākṛti (in logic) 188
 Vyāsa, 112, 116 146, 203
 Vyāvahara, 55 71
 YAJÑAVALKYA, code of, 70, 71
 Yājñika Brāhmin 160.
 Yājñopavīta, 60.
 Yajur veda, 20.
 Yama, 167
 Yantras (mystical diagrams), 120
 Yatis (Jains) 224.
 Yoga system of philosophy, 46 200, 201
 Yoga (concentration of the mind) 209 210.
 Yogīśvara (a shrine) 179.
 Yojan, or Yog 201
 Yogin, 93, 124
 Yoni, 95
 Yuga 120 121, 111
 Yuga 120 121, 111
 Yuga 120 121, 111
 ZAND-AVASTA, 5
 Zoroaster 5 47.

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